

T H E
W O R K S

Of that eminent Servant of **CHRIST**,
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Minister of the Gospel, and formerly
Pastor of a Congregation at Bedford.

BEING
Several Discourses upon Various Divine Subjects,
With **COPPER-PLATES**, adapted to the **PIL-**
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The Acceptable Sacrifice; or The excellency of a Broken Heart.

Shewing the Nature, Signs, and Proper Effects of a Contrite Spirit.

With a Preface prefixed thereunto by an eminent minister of the gospel in London.

A P R E F A C E to the READER.

THE author of the ensuing discourse (now with God, reaping the fruit of all his labour, diligence, and success, in his master's service) did experience in himself (through the grace of God) the nature, excellency, and comfort of a truly broken and contrite spirit. So that what is here written, is but a transcript out of his own heart; for God (who had much work for him to do) was still hewing and hammering him by his word, and sometimes also by more than ordinary temptations and desertions. The design, and also the issue thereof, through God's goodness, was the humbling and keeping of him low in his own eyes. The truth is, (as himself sometimes acknowledged), he always needed the thorn in the flesh, and God in mercy sent it him, lest, under his extraordinary circumstances, he should be exalted above measure; which perhaps was the evil that did more easily beset him than any other. But the Lord was pleased to over-rule it, to work for his good, and to keep him in that broken frame which is so acceptable unto him, and concerning which it is said, *That he healeth the broken in heart, and bindeth up their wounds.* And indeed it is a most necessary qualification that should always be found in the disciples of Christ, who are most eminent, and as stars of the first magnitude in the firmament of the church. Disciples, in the highest form of profession, need to be thus qualified in the exercise of every grace, and the performance of every duty: It is that which God doth principally and more especially look after, in all
our

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If 57. 15. our approaches and accessles to him. It is to him that
& 66. 2. God will look, and with him God will dwell, who is
poor, and of a contrite spirit. And the reason why
God will manifest so much respect to one so qualified,
is, because he carries it so becomely towards him :
He comes and lies at his feet, and discovers a quick-
ness of sense, and apprehensiveness of whatever may
be dishonourable and distasteful to God, Psal. 38. 4.
And if the Lord doth at any time but shake his rod
over him, he comes trembling, and kisses the rod,
1 Samuel and says, It is the Lord, let him do what seemeth
3. 18. him good. He is sensible he hath sinned and gone a-
stray like a lost sheep, and therefore will justify God
in his severest proceedings against him. This broken
heart is also a pliable and flexible heart, and prepared
to receive whatsoever impressions God shall make u-
pon it, and is ready to be moulded into any frame
that should best please the Lord. He says with Sa-
1 Samuel muel, Speak, Lord, for thy servant heareth, and with
3 10. David, When thou sayest, Seek ye my face; my
Pf. 278. heart said unto thee, Thy face, Lord, will I seek, and
so with Paul, who tremblingly said, Lord, What wilt
Act 9. 6 thou have me to do?

Now, therefore, surely such a heart as this must needs be very delightful to God. He says to us, *My son, give me thy heart.* But doubtless he means there a broken heart: an unbroken heart we may keep to ourselves; it is the broken heart which God will have us to give to him; for indeed it is all the amends that the best of us are capable of making, for all the injury we have done to God in sinning against him. We are not able to give better satisfaction for breaking God's laws, than by breaking our own hearts; this is all we can do of that kind, for the blood of Christ only must give the due and full satisfaction to the justice of God, for what provocations we are at any time guilty of: but all that we can do, is to accompany the acknowledgements we make of miscarriages with a broken and contrite spirit. Therefore we find, that when David had committed those two foul sins of adultery and murder against God, he saw that

that all his sacrifices signified nothing to the expiating of his guilt; therefore he brings to God a broken heart, which carried in it the best expression of indignation against himself, as of the highest respect he could shew to God, 2 Cor. 7. 11.

The day in which we live, and the present circumstances which the people of God, and these nations are under, do loudly proclaim a very great necessity of being in this broken and tender frame; for who can foresee what will be the issue of these violent fermentations that are amongst us? Who knows what will become of the ark of God? Therefore it is a seasonable duty with old Eli to sit trembling for it. Do we not also hear the sound of the trumpet, the alarm of wars; and ought we not with the prophet, cry out, *My bowels, my bowels, I am pained at my very heart; my heart maketh a noise in me, I cannot hold my peace?* Thus was that holy man affected with the consideration of what might befall Jerusalem, the temple and ordinance of God, &c. as the consequence of the present dark dispensations they were under. Will not a humble posture best become us when we have humbling providences in prospect? Mercy and judgement seem to be struggling in the same womb of providence; and which will come first out we know not; but neither of them can we comfortably meet, but with a broken and a contrite spirit. If judgement comes, Josiah's posture of tenderness will be the best we can be found in; and also to say with David, *My flesh trembleth for fear of thee, and I am afraid of thy judgements.* It is very sad when God smites, and we are not grieved; which the prophet complains of, *Thou hast stricken them, but they have not grieved, &c. They have made their faces harder than a rock, they have refused to return.*

But such as know the power of his anger, will have a deep awe of God upon their hearts, and observing him in all his motions, will have the greatest apprehensions of his displeasure. So that when he is coming forth in any terrible dispensation, they will,

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accord,

according to their duty, prepare to meet him with a humble and broken heart. But if he should appear to us in his goodness, and further lengthen out the day of our peace and liberty, yet still the contrite frame will be most seasonable; then will be a proper time, with Job, to abhor ourselves in dust and ashes, *Job 42.6.* and to say with David, *Who are we that thou hast brought us hitherto?* *2 Samuel 7. 18.*

But we must still know that this broken tender heart is not a plant that grows in our own soil, but is the peculiar gift of God himself. He that made the heart must break the heart: We may be under heart-breaking providences, and yet the heart remain altogether unbroken; as it was with Pharaoh, whose heart, though it was under the hammers of ten terrible judgements, immediately succeeding one another, yet continued hardened against God. The heart of man is harder than hardness itself, till God softeneth and breaks it. Men move not, they relent not, let God thunder never so terribly; let God in the greatest earnest cast abroad his fire-brands, arrows, and death, in the most dreadful representations of wrath and judgement, yet still man trembles not, nor is any more astonished than if in all this God were but in jest, till he comes and falls to work with him, and forces him to cry out, What have I done? What shall I do?

Therefore let us have recourse to him, who, as he gives the new heart, so also therewith the broken heart. And let mens hearts be never so hard, if God comes once to deal effectually with them, they shall become mollified and tender; as it was with those hardened Jews who by wicked and cruel hands murdered the Lord of life: though they flouted it out a great while, yet how suddenly, when God brought them under the hammer of his word and spirit, in Peter's powerful ministry, were they broken, and being pricked in their hearts, cried out, *Men and brethren, what shall we do?* *Act. 2.37.*

And the like instance we have in the jailor, who was a most barbarous hard-hearted wretch; yet when God

God came to deal with him, he was soon tamed, and his heart became exceeding soft and tender, Acts 16. 29, 30.

Men may speak long enough, and the heart not at all be moved; but, *The voice of the Lord is powerful, the voice of the Lord is full of majesty, and breaketh the rocks and cedars: He turns the rock into a standing water, the flint into a fountain of waters.* And this is a glorious work indeed, that hearts of stone should be dissolved and melted into waters of godly sorrow, working repentance not to be repented of, 2 Cor. 7. 10.

When God speaks effectually the stoutest heart must melt and yield. Wait upon God, then, for the softening thy heart, and avoid whatsoever may be a means of hardening it; as the apostle cautions the Hebrews, *Take heed, lest you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin.* Heb. 3. 23.

Sin is deceitful, and will harden all those that indulge it: The more tender any man is to his lust, the more will he be hardened by it. There is a native hardeness in every man's heart; and though it may be softened by gospel means, yet if those means be afterwards neglected, the heart will fall to its native hardness again; as it is with the wax and the clay.

Therefore how much doth it behove us to keep close to God, in the use of all gospel-means, whereby our hearts being once softened, may be always kept so? which is best done by repeating the use of those means which were at first blessed for the softening of them.

The following treatise may be of great use to the people of God, (through his blessing accompanying it), to keep their hearts tender and broken, when so many *after their hardness, and impenitent hearts, are treating up wrath against the day of wrath.* Rom 2. 5,

O let none who peruse this book herd with that generation of hardened ones, but be a companion of all those that mourn in Zion, and whose hearts are broken for their own, the churches, and the nations, who indeed are the only likely ones that will stand in the gap to divert judgements. When Shishak king

of Egypt, with a great host, come up against Judah and having taken their frontier fenced cities, they sat down before Jerusalem, which put them all under a great consternation; but the king and princes upon this humbled themselves; the Lord sends a gracious message to them by Shemaiah the prophet, the import whereof was, That because they humbled themselves, the Lord would not destroy them, nor pour out his wrath upon them, by the hand of Shishak, 2 Chron. 12. 5, 6, 7.

The greater the party is of mourning Christians, the more hope we have that the storm impending may be blown over, and the blessings enjoined may yet be continued. As long as there is a fighting party we may hope to be yet preserved; at least such will have the mark set upon themselves, which shall distinguish them from those whom the slaughtermen shall receive commission to destroy, Ezek. 9. 4.

But I shall not further enlarge the porch, as designing to make way for the reader's entrance into the house, where I doubt not but he will be pleased with the furniture and provision he finds in it. And I shall only further assure him, that this whole book was not only prepared for, but also put into the press by the author himself, whom the Lord was pleased to remove (to the great loss and unexpressible grief of many precious souls) before the sheets could be all wrought off.

And now, as I hinted in the beginning, that what was transcribed out of the author's heart, into the book, may be transcribed out of the book into the hearts of all who shall peruse it, is the desire and prayer of

A lover and honourer of all saints as such,

Sept. 21. 1688.

GEORGE COKEYN.

The

The Acceptable Sacrifice; or The excellency of a Broken Heart.

The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise, Psal. li. 17.

THIS psalm is David's penitential psalm. It may be fitly so called, because it is a psalm by which is manifest the unfeigned sorrow which he had for his horrible sin, in defiling of Bathsheba, and slaying Uriah her husband; a relation at large of which you have in the 11th and 12th of the Second Samuel.

Many workings of heart; as this psalm sheweth, this poor man had, so soon as conviction did fall upon his spirit; One while he cries for mercy, then he confesses his heinous offences, then he bewails the depravity of his nature; sometimes he cries out to be washed and sanctified, and then again he is afraid that God will cast him away from his presence, and take his Holy Spirit utterly from him: And thus he goes on till he comes to the text, and there he stayeth his mind, finding in himself that heart and spirit which God did not dislike, *The sacrifices of God, says he, are a broken spirit*; as if he should say, I thank God I have that. *A broken and a contrite heart, says he, O God, thou wilt not despise*; as if he should say, I thank God I have that.

The words consist of two parts.

1. An assertion.
2. A demonstration of that assertion.

The assertion is this, *The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit.*

The demonstration is this, *Because a broken and a contrite heart God will not despise.*

In the assertion we have two things present themselves to our consideration.

1. That a broken spirit is to God a sacrifice.
2. That it is to God, as that which answereth to, or goeth beyond all sacrifices: *The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit.*

The

The Acceptable Sacrifice; or,

The demonstration of this is plain: for that heart God will not despise it: *A broken and a contrite heart O God, thou wilt not despise.*

Whence I draw this conclusion; That a spirit rightly broken, an heart truly contrite, is to God an excellent thing.

That is, a thing that goeth beyond all external duties whatever; for that is intended by this saying, *The sacrifices*, because it answereth to all sacrifices which we can offer to God; it serveth in the room of all: all our sacrifices without this are nothing, this alone is all.

There are four things that are very acceptable to God. The

First is, The sacrifice of the body of Christ for our sins: Of this you read, Heb. 10.; for there you have it preferred to all burnt-offerings and sacrifices; it is this that pleaseth God; it is this that sanctifieth, and so setteth the people acceptable in the sight of God.

Mark 12. 33. Secondly, Unfeigned love to God is counted better than all sacrifices, or external parts of worship, *And to love the Lord thy God with all the heart, with all the understanding, and with all the soul, and with all thy strength, and to love his neighbour as himself, is better than all whole burnt-offerings and sacrifices.*

Micah. 6. 6, 7, 8. Thirdly, To walk holily and humbly, and obediently, towards and before God, is another. *Hath the Lord as great delight in burnt-offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the Lord?--Behold; to obey is better than sacrifice; and to hearken, than the fat of rams.*

1 Samuel. 15. 22. Fourthly, And this in our text is the fourth: *The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: A broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise,*

But note by the way, that this broken, this broken and contrite heart, is thus excellent only to God: O God, saith he, *thou wilt not despise it*: By which is implied, the world have not this esteem or respect for such a heart, or for one that is of a broken and a contrite spirit: No, no, a man, a woman, that is blessed with a broken heart, is so far off from getting by that esteem with the world, that they are but

but burdens, and trouble houses where-ever they are or go: Such people carry with them molestation and disquietment; they are in carnal families as David, *1 Sam. 21.* was to the King of Gath, *troublers of the house.*

Their sighs, their tears, their day and night groans their cries and prayers, and solitary carriages, put all the carnal family out of order: Hence you have them brow-beaten by some, contemned by others, yea, and their company fled from and deserted by others. But mark the text, *A broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise,* but rather accept, for not to despise, is with God to esteem and set a high price upon.

But we will demonstrate by several particulars, that a broken spirit, a spirit rightly broken, an heart truly contrite, is to God an excellent thing.

1. This is evident from the comparison, *Thou desirest not sacrifice, else would I give it, thou delightest not in burnt-offerings: The sacrifices of God, are a broken spirit, &c.* Mark, he rejecteth sacrifices offerings and sacrifices: that is, all Levitical ceremonies under the law, and all external performances under the gospel; but accepteth a broken heart. It is therefore manifest by this, were there nothing else to be said, that proves, that a heart rightly broken, truly contrite, is to God an excellent thing; for as you see such a heart is set before all sacrifice, and yet they were the ordinances of God, and things that he commanded; but lo, a broken spirit is above them all, a contrite heart goes beyond them, yea, beyond them when all put together. Thou wilt not have the one, thou wilt not despise the other: O brethren, a broken and a contrite heart is an excellent thing. Have I said a broken heart, a broken and a contrite heart is esteemed above all sacrifices; I will add,

2. It is of greater esteem with God, than is either heaven or earth; and that is more than to be set before external duties. *Thus saith the Lord, heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool, where is the house that ye build me, or where is the place of my rest? For all these things hath mine hands made, and* *Isa. 66. 1, 2.*

all these things have been, saith the Lord: but to this man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and that trembleth at my word.

Mark, God saith, he hath made all these things; but he doth not say, that he will look to them, that is, take complacency and delight in them; no, there is that wanting in all that he hath made that should take up and delight his heart: But now, let a broken-hearted sinner come before him, yea, he ranges the world throughout to find out such an one, and having found him, *To this man, saith he, will I look.* I say again, that such a man to him is of more value than is either heaven or earth; *They, saith he, shall wax old;* they shall perish and vanish away; but this man he continueth; he, as is presented to us in another place, under another character, *he shall abide for ever.*

Heb. 1.

To this man will I look, with this man will I be delighted; for so to look doth sometimes signify. Thou

1 John 2.

hast ravished my heart, my sister, my spouse, saith

Song 4. 9

Christ to his humble-hearted, thou hast ravished my heart with one of thine eyes, (while it is as a conduit to let the rivers out of thy broken heart). I am taken, saith he, with one chain of thy neck. Here you see he looks and is ravished, he looks and is taken, as it

Song 7. 5.

saith in another place, The king is held in the gal-

ch. 1. 15.

leries; that is, is taken with his beloved, with the doves

eyes of his beloved, with the contrite spirit of his people. But it is not thus reported of him with respect to heaven or earth: them he sets more lightly by, Them

1 Pet. 3. 7.

he reserves unto fire against the day of judgement and perdition of ungodly men, but the broken in heart are his beloved, his jewels.

Wherefore what I have said as to this must go for the truth of God, to wit, That a broken-hearted sinner, a sinner with a contrite spirit, is of more esteem with God, than is either heaven or earth: He saith he hath made them, but he doth not say he will look to them: He saith they are his throne and footstool, but he doth not say they have taken or ravished his heart: No, it is those that are of a contrite spirit do this.

But

But there is yet more in the words; *To this man will I look*; that is, For this man will I care, about this man will I camp, I will put this man under my protection; forso to look to one, doth sometimes signify; and I take the meaning in this place to be such, Prov. 27. 23.; Jer. 39. 12.; chap. 40. 4.

The Lord upholdeth all that fall, and raiseth up all that are bowed down. And the broken-hearted are of this number; wherefore he careth for, campeth about, and hath set his eyes upon such an one for good. This, therefore, is a second demonstration to prove, that the man that hath his spirit rightly broken his heart truly contrite, is of great esteem with God.

3. Yet further, God doth not only prefer such an one, as has been said, before heaven and earth, but he loveth, he desireth to have that man for an intimate, for a companion; he must dwell; he must cohabit with him that is of a broken heart, with such as are of a contrite spirit. *For thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy, I will dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, &c.* Is. 57. 15.

Behold here, both the majesty and condescension of the high and lofty One; His majesty, in that he is high, and the inhabiter of eternity; *I am the high and lofty One*, saith he, *I inhabit eternity*. Verily this consideration is enough to make the broken-hearted man creep into a mouse-hole to hide himself from such a majesty. But behold his heart, his condescending mind; I am for dwelling also with him that hath a broken heart, with him that is of a contrite spirit; that is the man that I would converse with, that is the man with whom I will cohabit; that is, *He*, saith God, *I will chuse for my companion*: For to desire to dwell with one supposeth all these things; and verily, of all the men in the world, none have acquaintance with God, none understand what communion with him, and what his teachings mean, but such as are of a broken and contrite heart; *He is nigh to them that are of a broken spirit*, These are intended in the 14th Psalm, where it is said, *The Lord looked down*
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from heaven, to see if any did understand and seek God ; that he might find some body in the world with whom he might converse ; for indeed there is none else that either understand, or that can tend to hearken to him. God, as I may say, is forced to break mens hearts, before he can make them willing to cry to him, or be willing that he should have any concerns with them ; the rest shut their eyes, stop their ears, withdraw their hearts, or say unto God, Be gone, Job. 21. But now the broken in heart can tend it, he has leisure, yea, leisure and will, and understanding, and all ; and therefore is a fit man to have to do with God. There is also room in this man's house, in this man's heart, in this man's spirit, for God to dwell, for God to walk, for God to set up a kingdom.

Amos 33. Here, therefore, is suitableness. *Can two walk together, saith God, except they are agreed. The broken-hearted desireth God's company ; When wilt thou come unto me ? saith he. The broken-hearted loveth to hear God speak and talk to him. Here is a suitableness: Cause me, saith he, to bear joy and gladness, that the bones which thou hast broken may rejoice.*

Pf. 51. 8. But here lies the glory, in that the high and lofty One, the God that inhabiteth eternity, and that has a high and holy place for his habitation, should chuse to dwell with, and to be a companion of the broken heart, and of them that are of a contrite spirit : Yea, and here is also great comfort for such.

4. God doth not only prefer such an heart before all sacrifices, nor esteem such a man above heaven and earth, nor yet only desire to be of his acquaintance, but he reserveth for him his chief comforts, his heart-reviving and soul-cherishing cordials : *I dwell, saith he, with such to revive them, and to support and comfort them, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones.* The broken-hearted man is a fainting man ; he has his qualms, his sinking fits ; he oftentimes dies away with pain and fear ; he must be stayed with flaggons, and comforted with apples, or else he can't tell what to do ; he pines, he pines away in his iniquity ; nor can any thing keep him

him alive and make him well, but the comforts and cordials of Almighty God: Wherefore with such an one God will dwell, to revive the heart, to revive the spirit: *To revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones.* Ez. 37. 10, 11.

God has cordials; but they are to comfort them that are cast down, 2 Cor. 7. 6. and such are the broken-hearted; as for them that are whole, they need not the physician, Mark 1. 17. They are the broken in spirit that stand in need of cordials; physicians are men of no esteem but with them that feel their sickness; and this is one reason why God is so little accounted of in the world, even because they have not been made sick by the wounding stroke of God. But when a man is wounded, has his bones broken, or is made sick, and laid at the grave's mouth who is of that esteem with him as is an able physician? what is so much desired as is the cordials, comforts, and suitable supplies of the skilful physician in those matters: And thus it is with the broken-hearted; he needs, and God has prepared for him plenty of the comforts and cordials of heaven, to succour and relieve his sinking soul.

Wherefore such a one lieth under all the promises that have succour in them, and consolation for men, sick and desponding under the sense of sin and the heavy wrath of God; and they, says God, shall be refreshed and revived with them.

Yea, they are designed for them; he hath therefore broken their hearts, he hath therefore wounded their spirits; that he might make them apt to relish his reviving cordials, that he might minister to them his reviving comforts.

For indeed, so soon as he hath broken, his bowels yearn, and his compassions roul up and down within him, and will not suffer him to abide afflicting. Ephraim was one of these; but so soon as God had smitten him, behold his heart, how it works towards him: *Is Ephraim, saith he, my dear son? that is he is so: is he a pleasant child? that is, he is so; for since I spake against him, I do earnestly remember him* Jer. 31. 8, 19, 20.

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still ; therefore my bowels are troubled for him ; I will surely have mercy upon him, saith the Lord God. This therefore is another demonstration.

5. As God prefers such a heart, and esteems the man that has it, above heaven and earth ; as he covets intimacy with such an one, and prepares for him his cordials, so when he sent his son Jesus into the world to be a Saviour, he gave him in special a charge to take care of such ; yea, that was one of the main reasons he sent him down from heaven, anointed for his work on earth.

If. 61. 1. The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me, saith he ; because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor ; he hath sent me to bind up the broken hearted, &c.

Now that this is meant of Christ, is confirmed by his own lips ; for in the days of his flesh, he takes this book in his hand, when he was in the synagogue at Nazareth, and read this very place unto the people ; and then tells them, that that very day that scripture was fulfilled in their ears, Luke 6. 16. 17. 18.

But see, these are the souls whose welfare is contrived in the heavens. God consulted their salvation, their deliverance, their health, before his Son came down from thence. Doth not therefore this demonstrate, that a broken-hearted man, that a man of a contrite spirit, it is of great esteem with God. I have often wondered at David that he should give Joab and the men of war a charge, that they take heed that they carry it tenderly to that young rebel Absalom his son, 2 Sam. 18. 5. But that God, the high God, the God against whom we have sinned, should, so soon as he has smitten, give his Son a command, a charge a commission to take care of, to bind up and heal the broken in heart ; this is that which can never be sufficiently admired or wondered at by men or angels.

And as this was his commission, so he acted ; as is evidently set forth by the parable of the man who fell among thieves : He went to him, poured in his wounds wine and oil ; he bound him up, took him, set him upon his own beast, had him to an inn, gave the host a charge to look well to him, with money in hand, and

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a promise at his return to recompence him in what further he should be expensive while he was under his care; Luke 10. 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35.

Behold, therefore, the care of God which he has for the broken in heart; he has given a charge to Christ his Son, to look well to them, and to bind up and heal their wounds. Behold also the faithfulness of Christ, who doth not hide, but read this commission as soon as he entereth upon his ministry, and also falls into the practical part thereof: *He healeth the broken in heart, and bindeth up his wounds.* Ps. 147. 3.

And behold again into whose care a broken heart and a contrite spirit hath put this poor creature; he is under the care of God, the care and cure of Christ. If a man was sure that his disease had put him under the special care of the king and queen, yet could he not be sure of life, he might die under their sovereign hands. Ay, but here is a man in the favour of God, and under the hand of Christ to be healed; under whose hand none yet ever died for want of skill and power in him to save their life; wherefore this man must live; Christ has in commission not only to bind up his wounds, but to heal him; he has of himself so expounded it in reading his commission? wherefore he that has his heart broken, and that is of a contrite spirit, must not only be taken in hand, but healed: healed of his pain, grief, sorrow, sin, and fears of death and hell-fire; wherefore he adds, That he must give unto such, *beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness, and must comfort all that mourn.* Is. 61. 2, 3.

This, I say, he has in the commission, the broken-hearted are put into his hand, and he has said himself he will heal him: Hence he says of that same man, *I have seen his ways, and will heal him; I will lead him also, and restore comforts unto him, and to his mourners; and I will heal him.* And this is a fifth demonstration. Is. 57. 15. — 19.

6. As God prefers such a heart, and so esteems the man that has it, as he desires his company, has provided for him his cordials, and given a charge to Christ to heal him, so he has promised in conclusion to

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to save him. *He saveth such as be of a contrite spirit;*
or, as the margin has it, that be contrite of spirit.

And this is the conclusion of all; for to save a man
Ps. 4.18. is the end of all special mercy. *He saveth such as be
of a contrite spirit.* To save, is to forgive; for with-
out forgiveness of sins we cannot be saved. To save,
is to preserve one in this miserable world, and to de-
liver one from all those devils, temptations, snares,
and destructions, that would, were we not kept, were
we not preserved of God, destroy us body and soul
for ever. To save, is to bring a man both body and
soul to glory, and to give him an eternal mansion-house
in heaven, that he may dwell in the presence of this
good God, and the Lord Jesus, and to sing to them
the songs of his redemption for ever and ever. This it
is to be saved; nor can any thing less than this com-
plete the salvation of the sinner. Now, this is to be
the lot of him that is of a broken heart, and the end
that God will make with him that is of a contrite spi-
rit. *He saveth such as be contrite of spirit.* He sav-
eth such. This is excellent.

But, do the broken in heart believe this? Can they
imagine, that this is to be the end that God has de-
signed them to, and that he intended to make with
them in the day in which he began to break their
hearts? No, no; they, alas! think quite the contrary.
They are afraid, that this is but the beginning of
death, and a token that they shall never see the face
of God with comfort, either in this world or that
P. 15. 11. which is to come. Hence they cry, *Cast me not away*
Ps. 88. 4, 5. *from thy presence: or, Now I am free among the dead
whom God remembers no more.*

For indeed there goes to the breaking of the heart
a visible appearance of the wrath of God, and a
home charge from heaven of the guilt of sin to the
conscience. This to reason is very dreadful; for it
cuts the soul down to the ground: for a wounded
Prov. 18. spirit none can bear.

It seems also now to this man, that this is but the
beginning of hell; but as it were the first step down
to the pit; when, alas! all these are but the begin-
nings

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nings of love, and but that which makes way for life. The Lord kills before he makes alive; he wounds before his hands make whole. Yea, he does the one in order to, or because he would do the other; he wounds, because his purpose is to heal; *he maketh sore, and bindeth up: he woundeth, and his hands make whole*; Deut. 32. 39. 1 Sam. 2. 6. Job 5. 18.

His design, I say, is the salvation of the soul. He scourgeth, he breaketh the heart of every son whom he receiveth, and wo be to him whose heart God breaketh not.

And thus have I proved what at first I asserted, namely, That a spirit rightly broken, an heart truly contrite, is to God an excellent thing. *A broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise.* For thus say I,

1. This is evident; for that it is better than sacrifices, than all sacrifice.
2. The man that has it, is of more esteem with God than heaven and earth.
3. God coveteth such a man for his intimate and house companion.
4. He reserveth for him his cordials, and spiritual comforts.
5. He has given his Son a charge, a commandment to take care that the broken-hearted be healed; and he is resolved to heal them.
6. And concluded, that the broken-hearted, and they that are of a contrite spirit, shall be saved, that is, possessed of the heavens.

I come now in order to shew you what a broken heart, and what a contrite spirit is. This must be done, because in the discovery of this lies both the comfort of them that have it, and the conviction of them that have it not.

Now, that I may do this the better, I must propound and speak to these four things.

1. I must shew you what an one that heart is that is not broken, that is not contrite.
2. I must shew you how, or with what the heart is broken and made contrite.

3. Shew

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3 Shew you how, and what it is, when broken and made contrite. And,

4. I shall, last of all, give you some signs of a broken and contrite heart.

I. For the first of these, to wit, What an one that heart is that is not a broken, that is not a contrite heart.

1. The heart, before it is broken, is hard and stubborn, and obstinate against God, and the salvation of the soul, Zach. 7. 12. Deut. 2. 30. chap. 9. 27.

2. It is an heart full of evil imaginations and darkness, Gen. 8. 12. Rom. 1. 21.

3. It is a heart deceitful and subject to be deceived especially about the things of an eternal concernment; Is. 44. 20. Deut. 11. 16.

4. It is an heart that rather gathereth iniquity and vanity to itself than any thing that is good for the soul; Psal. 41. 6. Psal. 94. 11.

5. It is an unbelieving heart, and one that will turn away from God to sin; Heb. 3. 12. Deut. 17. 17.

6. It is an heart not prepared for God, being uncircumcised, nor for the reception of his holy word; 2 Chron. 12. 14. Psal. 78. 8. Acts 7. 51.

7. It is an heart not single, but double; it will pretend to serve God, but will withal lean to the devil and sin; Psal. 12. 2. Ezek. 33. 31.

8. It is an heart proud and stout; it loves not to be controuled, though the controuler be God himself; Psal. 101. 5. Prov. 16. 5. Mal. 3.

9. It is an heart that will give place to Satan, but will resist the Holy Ghost; Acts 5. 3. chap. 7. 51.

Jer. 18. 9. 10. In a word, *It is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: so wicked that none can know it.*

That the heart before it is broken is such, and worse than I have described it to be, is sufficiently seen by the whole course of the world. Where is the man, (whose heart has not been broken, and whose spirit is not contrite), that according to the word of God, deals honestly with his own soul?

It is one character of a right heart, that it is found in God's statutes, and honest, Psal. 119. 80. Luke 8. 15.

Now, an honest heart will not put off itself, nor be
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put off with that which will not go for current money with the merchants; I mean, with that which will not go for saving grace at the day of judgement. But alas! alas! but few men, how honest soever they are to others, have honesty towards themselves; though he is the worst of deceivers who deceiveth his own soul, as James has it, about the things of his own soul; Jam. i. 22, 26. But,

II. I now come to shew you, with what and how the heart is broken, and the spirit made contrite.

The instrument with which the heart is broken, and with which the spirit is made contrite, is the word. *Jer. 23.*
Is not my word, says God, like a fire and like a hammer, that breaketh the rock in pieces. 29.

The rock, in this text, is the heart, which in another place is compared to an adamant, which adamant is harder than flint; Zach 7. 11, 12. Ezek. 3. 9.

This rock, this adamant, this stony heart is broken and made contrite by the word. But it only is so, when the word is as a fire, and as a hammer to break and melt it. And then, and then only, it is as a fire, and a hammer to the heart to break it, when it is managed by the arm of God. No man can break the heart with the word; no angel can break the heart with the word; that is, if God forbears to second it by mighty power from heaven. This made Balaam go without an heart rightly broken, and truly contrite, though he was rebuked by an angel; and the Pharisees die in their sins, though rebuked for them, and admonished to turn from them, by the Saviour of the world. Wherefore, though the word is the instrument with which the heart is broken, yet it is not broken with the word, till that word is managed by the might and power of God.

This made the prophet Isaiah, after long preaching, cry out, *That he had laboured for nought, and Is. 49. 5.*
in vain: and this made him cry to God, *to rent the & 64. 2.*
heavens and come down: that the mountains, or rocky hills, or hearts, might be broken, and melt at his presence.

For he found by experience, that as to this, no effectual work could be done, unless the Lord put to

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his hand. This also is often intimated in the scriptures, where it saith, *When the preachers preached effectually to the breaking of mens hearts, the Lord wrought with them; the hand of the Lord was with them,* and the like, Mark 16. 20.; Acts 11. 21.

Now when the hand of the Lord is with the word then it is mighty: it is mighty *through God to the pulling down of strong holds.* It is sharp, then, as a sword in the soul and spirit; it sticks like an arrow in the hearts of sinners, to the causing of the people to fall at his foot for mercy. Then it is, as was said afore, as a fire, and as hammer to break this rock in pieces, 2 Cor. 10. 4.; Heb. 4. 14.; Psal. 110. 3.

And hence the word is made mention of under a double consideration.

1. As it stands by itself.

2. As attended with power from heaven.

1. As it stands by itself, and is not seconded with saving operation from heaven, it is called the word only, the word barely, or as if it was only the word of men, 1 Thes. 5, 6, 7. 1 Cor. 4. 19, 20. 1 Thes. 2. 13.

Because, then, it is only as managed by men, who are not able to make it accomplish that work. The word of God, when in a man's hand only, is like the father's sword in the hand of the sucking child; which sword, though never so well pointed, and tho' never so sharp on the edges, is not now able to conquer a foe, and to make an enemy fall and cry out for mercy, because it is but in the hand of the child.

But now, let the same sword be put into the hand of a skilful father, (and God is both skilful and able to manage his word), and then the sinner, and then the proud helpers too, are both made to stoop, and submit themselves; wherefore I say, though the word be the instrument, yet of itself doth do no saving good to the soul; the heart is not broken, nor the spirit made contrite thereby; it only worketh death, and leaveth men in the chains of their sins, still faster bound over to eternal condemnation; 2 Cor. 2. 15, 16.

2. But when seconded by mighty power, then the same word is as the roaring of a lion, as the piercing
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of a sword, as a burning fire in the bones, as thunder and as a hammer that dashes all to pieces; Jer. 25. 30. Amos 1. 2. chap. 3. 8. Acts 2. 37. Jer. 20. 9. Psal. 29. 3.—10

Wherefore, from hence it is to be concluded, that whoever has heard the word preached, and has not heard the voice of the living God therein, has not as yet had their hearts broken, nor their spirits made contrite for their sins.

And this leads me to the second thing, to wit, To shew how the heart is broken and the spirit made contrite by the word, and verily it is when the word comes with power. But this is but general; wherefore, more particularly.

First, Then the word works effectually to this purpose, when it findeth out the sinner and his sin, and shall convince him that it has found him out. Thus it was with our first father; when he had sinned, he sought to hide himself from God; he gets among the trees of the garden, and there he shrouds himself; but yet, not thinking himself secure, he covers himself with fig-leaves, and now he lieth quiet. Now God shall not find me, thinks he, nor know what I have done. But lo! by and by, he hears the voice of the Lord God walking in the garden. And now Adam, what do you mean to do? Why, as yet, he skulketh, and hides his head, and seeks yet to lie undiscovered; but behold, the voice cries out, *Adam! Gen. 2. 7.* and now he begins to tremble. *Adam, where art thou? —12.* says God; and now Adam is made to answer. But the voice of the Lord God doth not leave him here: no, it now begins to search, and to inquire after his doings, and to unravel what he had wrapt together and covered, until it had made him bare and naked in his own sight before the face of God.

Thus, therefore, doth the word, when managed by the arm of God. It findeth out, it singeth out the sinner; the sinner finds it so; it finds out the sins of the sinner; it unravels his whole life, it strips him and lays him naked in his own sight before the face of God; neither can the sinner nor his wickedness be

longer hid and covered; and now begins the sinner to see what he never saw before.

2. Another instance for this is David, the man of our text. He sins, he sins grossly, he sins and hides it; yea, and seeks to hide it from the face of God and man. Well, Nathan is sent to preach a preaching to him, and that in common, and that in special: in common, by a parable; in special, by a particular application of it to him. While Nathan only preached in common or in general, David was fish-whole, and stood as right in his own eyes as if he had been as innocent and as harmless as any man alive. But God had a love for David; and therefore commands his servant Nathan to go home, not only to David's ears, but to David's conscience.

1 Sam. 12. Well, David now must fall: Says Nathan, *Thou art the man*; says David, *I have sinned*, and then his heart was broken, and his spirit made contrite; as this psalm and our text doth shew.

3. A third instance is that of Saul; he had heard many a sermon, and was become a great professor, yea, he was more zealous than were many of his equals; but his heart was never broken, nor his spirit ever made contrite, till he heard one preach from heaven, till he heard God, in the word of God, making inquiry after his sins: *Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?* says Jesus; and then he can stand no longer; for then his heart brake, then he falls to the ground, then he trembles, then he cries out, *Who art thou, Lord?* and, *Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?*

Act. 8.

Wherefore, as I said, Then the word works effectually to this purpose, when it findeth out the sinner and his sin, and also when it shall convince him that it has found him out. Only I must join here a caution, for every operation of the word upon the conscience is not saving; nor doth all conviction end in the saving conversion of the sinner. It is then only such an operation of the word that is intended, namely, that shews the sinner not only the evil of his ways, but brings the heart unfeignedly over to God by Christ. And this brings me to the third thing.

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III. I am therefore come to shew you how and what the heart is when broken and made contrite. And this I must do, by opening unto you the two chief expressions in the text.

1. What is meant by this word *broken*.

2. What is meant by this word *contrite*.

First, For this word *broken*, Tindal renders it a troubled heart; but I think there is more in it. I take it, therefore, to be a heart disabled, as to former actions, even as a man whose bones are broken, is disabled, as to his way of running, leaping, wrestling, or ought else, which vainly he was wont to do; wherefore, that which was called a broken heart in the text, he calls his broken bones, in verse the eighth: *Cause me, saith he, to hear joy and gladness, that the bones which thou hast broken may rejoice.* p/ 38. 8. And why is the breaking of the heart compared to the breaking of the bones? but because, as when the bones are broken, the outward man is disabled as to what it was wont to do; so when the spirit is broken, the inward man is disabled as to what vanity and folly it before delighted in; hence feebleness is joined with this brokenness of heart. I am feeble, saith he, and sore broken. I have lost my strength and former vigour, as to vain and sinful courses.

This, then, it is to have the heart broken; namely, to have it lamed, disabled, and taken off; by sense of God's wrath due to sin, from that course of life it formerly was conversant in; and to shew that this work is no fancy, nor done but with great trouble to the soul, it is compared to the putting the bones out of joint, the breaking of the bones, the burning of the bones with fire, or as the taking the natural moisture from the bones, the vexing of the bones, &c. Psal. 23. 14. Jer. 20. 9. Lam. 1. 13. Psal. 6. 2. Prov. 17. 22.

All which are expressions adorned with such similitudes, as do undeniably declare, that to sense and feeling, a broken heart is a grievous thing.

Secondly, What is meant by the word *contrite*. A contrite spirit is a penitent one; one sorely grieved, and

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and deeply sorrowful, for the sins it has committed against God, and to the damage of the soul; and so it is to be taken in all those places where a contrite spirit is made mention of; as in Psal. 34. 18. If. 57. 15. chap. 66. 2.

As a man that has by his folly procured a broken leg or arm, is heartily sorry that ever he was so foolish as to be engaged in such foolish ways of idleness and vanity; so he whose heart is broken with a sense of God's wrath due to his sin, hath deep sorrow in his soul, and greatly repents that ever he should be such a fool, as by rebellious doings to bring himself and his soul to so much sharp affliction. Hence, while others are sporting themselves in vanity, such a one doth
 Pf 38 5. call his sin his greatest folly: *My wounds stink, and*
 69. 5. *are corrupt, saith David, because of my foolishness.*
 And again, *O God, thou knowest my foolishness, and my sins are not hid from thee.*

Men, whatever they say with their lips, cannot conclude, if yet their hearts want breaking, that sin is a foolish thing: Hence it says, *The foolishness of fools is their folly, Prov. 14. 24.*

That is, the foolishness of some men is, that they take pleasure in their sins; for their sins are their foolishness, and the folly of their soul lies in their countenancing of this foolishness. But the man whose heart is broken, he is none of these, he cannot be one of these, no more than he that has his bones broken can rejoice that he is desired to play a match at foot-ball. Hence to hear others talk foolishly, is to the grief of those whom God has wounded: or, as it is in another place, *Their words are like the piercings of a sword, Psal. 69. 26.; Prov. 12. 18.*

This therefore I take to be the meaning of these two words, a *broken* and a *contrite* spirit.

IV. Lastly, As to this, I now come more particularly to give you some signs of a broken heart, of a broken and a contrite spirit.

First, A broken-hearted man, such as is intended in the text, is a sensible man; he is brought to the exercise of all the senses of his soul: All others are
 dead,

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dead, senseless, and without true feeling of what the broken-hearted man is sensible of.

1. He sees himself to be what others are ignorant of; that is, he sees himself to be, not only a sinful man, but a man by nature in the gall and bond of sin. *In the gall of sin*: it is Peter's expression to Simon, and it is a saying common to all men; for every man in a state of nature is in the gall of sin; he was shapen in it, conceived in it; it has also possession of, and by that possession infected the whole of his soul and body, Psal. 51. 5.; Acts 8. 23.

This he sees, this he understands: every professor sees not this, because the blessing of a broken heart is not bestowed on every one. David says, *There is no soundness in my flesh*; And Solomon suggests, that *A plague or running sore is in the very heart*: But every one perceives not this, Psal. 38. 3.; 1 Kings 8. 38.

He saith again, that his wounds stank, and were *Ps. 38. 5.* corrupted: that his sore ran, and ceased not. *& 77. 2.*

But these things the brutish man, the man whose heart was never broken, has no understanding of: But the broken-hearted, the man that has a broken spirit, he sees, as the prophet has it; he sees his sickness, he sees his wound; *When Ephraim saw his sickness, and Judah saw his wound, he sees it to his grief, he sees it to his sorrow.* *Hof. 5. 13.*

2. He feels what others have no sense of; he feels the arrows of the Almighty, and that they stick fast in him: He feels how sore and sick, by the smiting of God's hammer upon his heart to break it, his poor soul is made: He feels a burden intolerably lying upon his spirit. *Mine iniquities, saith he, are gone over my head as an heavy burden, they are too heavy for me.* He feels also the heavy hand of God upon his soul, a thing unknown to carnal men, Psal. 38. 2.; Hof. 6. 13.; Psal. 38. 4.

He feels pain, being wounded, even such pains as others cannot understand, because they are not broken. *My heart, says David, is sore pained within me. Why so? Why! The terrors of death are fallen upon me. The terrors of death cause pain, yea, pain of the highest*

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highest nature; hence that which is here called *pains*, is in another place called *pangs*; Psal. 55. 4.; Isa. 21. 3:

Ez 30. You know broken bones occasion pain; strong pain,
29 yea, pain that will make a man or woman groan; *with the groaning of a deadly wounded man*, Ezek. 30. 24.

Soul pain is the forest pain; in comparison to which the pain of the body is a very tolerable thing. Prov. 18. 14.

Pf 116. Now, here is soul pain, here is heart pain; here we are discoursing of a wounded, of a broken spirit; wherefore this pain is to be felt to the sinking of the whole man, neither can any support this but God. Here is death in this pain, death for ever, without God's special mercy; and this the broken-hearted man doth feel. *The sorrows of death*, said David, *compassed me about, and the pains of hell got hold upon me, and I found trouble and sorrow.*

Ay, I'll warrant thee, poor man, thou foundest trouble and sorrow indeed; for the pains of hell, and sorrows of death, are pains and sorrows the most intolerable. But this the man is acquainted with, that has his heart broken.

3. As he sees and feels, so he hears that which augments his wo and sorrow. You know, if a man has his bones broken, he does not only see and feel, but oft-times also hear what increases his grief; as, that his wounds are incurable; that his bone is not rightly set; that there is danger of a gangrene; that he may be lost for want of looking to: These are the voices, the saying, that haunt the house of one that has his bones broken. And a broken-hearted man knows what I mean by this; he hears that which makes his lips quiver, and at the noise of which he seems to feel rottenness enter into his bones; he trembleth in himself, and wishes that he may hear joy and gladness, that the bones, the heart, and spirit, which God has broken, may rejoice, Hab. 3. 16.; Psal. 51. 8.

He thinks he hears God say, the devil say, his conscience say, and all good men to whisper among themselves, saying, There is no help for him from God. Job heard this, David heard this, Haman heard this;

this; and this is the common sound in the ears of the broken-hearted.

4. The broken-hearted smell what others cannot scent: Alas! sin never smelled so to any man alive as it smells to the broken-hearted. You know wounds will stink, but no stink like that of sin to the broken-hearted man: His own sins stink, and so doth the sins of all the world to him. Sin is like carrion, it is of a stinking nature; yea, it has the worst of smells; however, some men like it, Psal. 38. 5.

But none are offended with the scent thereof but God and the broken-hearted sinner. My wounds stink, and are corrupt, saith he, both in God's nostrils and mine own.

But, alas! who smells the stink of sin? None of the carnal world; they, like carrion-crows, seek it, love it, and eat it as the child eats bread. *They eat up the sins of my people, saith God, and set their heart on their iniquity.* Hos. 4. 8.

This, I say, they do, because they do not smell the nauseous scent of sin. You know, that what is nauseous to the smell cannot be palatable to the taste. The broken-hearted man doth find, that sin is nauseous, and therefore cries out, It stinketh. They also think at times the smell of fire, of fire and brimstone, is upon them, they are so sensible of the wages due to sin.

5. The broken-hearted is also a tasting man. Wounds, if sore, and full of pains, of great pains, do sometimes alter the taste of a man; they make him think his meat, his drink, yea, that cordials have a bitter taste in them. How many times doth the poor people of God, that are the only men that know what a broken-heart doth mean, cry out, that gravel, wormwood, gall, and vinegar, was made their meat? Lam. 3. 15, 16, 19.

This gravel, gall, and wormwood, is the true temporal taste of sin; and God, to make them loathe it for ever, doth feed them with it till their hearts do ake, and break therewith. Wickedness is pleasant of taste to the world; hence it is said, *They feed on*
E *ashes,*

ishes, they feed on the wind, Isa. 44. 20.; Hof. 12. 1. Lusts, or any thing that is vile and refuse, the carnal world think relishes well; as is set out most notably in the parable of the prodigal son: *He would fain have filled his belly, saith our Lord, with the husks that swine did eat.* But the broken-hearted man has a relish that is true as to these things, though, by reason of the anguish of his soul, it also abhors all manner of dainty meat, Job 33. 19, 20.; Psal. 107. 17, 18, 19.

Thus I have shewed you one sign of a broken-hearted man: he is a sensible man, he has all the senses of his soul awakened, he can see, hear, feel, taste, smell, and that as none but himself can do. I come now to another sign of a broken and contrite man.

Secondly, And that is, He is a very sorrowful man. This, as the other is natural to one that is in pain, and that has his bones broken, to be a grieved and sorrowful man.

He is none of the jolly ones of the times, nor can he, for his bones, his heart is broken.

1. He is sorry that he feels and finds in himself a pravity of nature: I told you before, he is sensible of it, he sees it, he feels it; and here I say, he is sorry for it. It is this that makes him call himself wretched man; it is this that makes him loathe and abhor himself; it is this that makes him blush, blush before God and be ashamed, Rom. 7. 24.; Job 42. 5, 6.; Ezek. 36. 31.

He finds by nature no form nor comeliness in himself, but the more he looks in the glass of the word, the more unhandsome, the more deformed he perceiveth sin has made him. Every body sees not this, therefore every body is not sorry for it: but the broken in heart sees that he is by sin corrupted, marred, full of lewdness and naughtiness; he sees that in him, that is, in his flesh, dwells no good thing; and this makes him sorry, yea, it makes him sorry at heart. A man that has his bones broken, finds he is spoiled, marred, disabled from doing as he would and should, at which he is grieved and made sorry.

Many are sorry for actual transgressions, because they

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they do oft bring them to shame before men; but few are sorry for the defects that sin has made in nature, because they see not those defects themselves. A man cannot be sorry for the sinful defects of nature, till he sees they have rendered him contemptible to God; nor is it any thing but a sight of God that can make him truly see what he is, and so be heartily sorry for being so. Now *mine eyes see thee*, saith Job, *now I abhor myself. Wo is me, I am undone*, saith the prophet, *for mine eyes have seen the Lord the King*. And it was this that made Daniel say, *His comeliness in him was turned into corruption*: for he had now the vision of the Holy One, Job 42. 6.; Isa. 6. 1,—5.; Dan. 10. 8.

Visions of God break the heart, because by the sight the soul then has of his perfections, it sees its own infinite and unspeakable disproportion, because of the vileness of its nature.

Suppose a company of ugly, uncomely, deformed persons, dwelt together in one house; and suppose that they never yet saw any man or woman more than themselves, that were arrayed with the splendors and perfections of nature; these would not be capable of comparing themselves with any but themselves, and consequently would not be affected and made sorry for their uncomely natural defections. But now bring them out of their cells and holes of darkness, where they have been shut up by themselves, and let them take a view of the splendor and perfections of beauty that are in others, and then, if at all, they will be sorry and dejected at the view of their own defects.

This is the case; men by sin are marred, spoiled, corrupted, depraved, but they may dwell by themselves in the dark; they see neither God, nor angels, nor saints, in their excellent nature and beauty; and therefore they are apt to count their own uncomely parts their ornaments and their glory. But now, let such, as I said, see God, see saints, or the ornaments of the Holy Ghost, and themselves as they are without them, and then they cannot but must be affected

with and sorry for their own deformity. When the Lord Christ put forth but a little of his excellency before his servant Peter's face, it raised up the depravity of Peter's nature before him to his great confusion and shame ; and made him cry out to him in the midst of all his fellows, *Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord.*

Luke 5. 4.
— 8.

This therefore is the cause of a broken heart, even a sight of divine excellencies, and a sense that I am a poor, depraved, spoiled, defiled wretch ; and this sight having broken the heart, begets sorrow in the broken-hearted.

2. The broken-hearted is a sorrowful man ; for that he finds his depravity of nature strong in him, to the putting forth itself to oppose and overthrow what his changed mind doth prompt him to, *When I would do good,* saith Paul, *evil is present with me.* Evil is present to oppose, to resist, and make head against the desires of my soul. The man that has his bones broken, may have yet a mind to be industriously occupied in a lawful and honest calling ; but he finds by experience, that an infirmity attends his present condition that strongly resists his good endeavours ; and at this he shakes his head, makes complaints, and with sorrow of heart he sighs and says, *I cannot do the thing that I would ;* Rom. 7. 15. ; Gal. 5. 17.

Rom 7.
21.

I am weak, I am feeble ; I am not only depraved, but by that depravity deprived of ability to put good motions, good intentions and desires into execution, to completeness ; O, says he, I am ready to halt, my sorrow is continually before me.

You must know the broken-hearted loves God, loves his soul, loves good, and hates evil. Now, for such an one to find in himself an opposition and continual contradiction to this holy passion, it must needs cause sorrow, godly sorrow, as the Apostle Paul calls it. For such are made sorry after a godly sort. To be sorry for that thy nature is with sin depraved, and that through this depravity thou art deprived of ability to do what the word and thy holy mind doth prompt thee to, is to be sorry after a godly sort. For this

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this sorrow worketh that in thee, of which thou wilt never have cause to repent; no, not to eternity; 2 Cor. 7. 9, 10, 11.

3. The broken-hearted man is sorry for those breaches that by reason of the depravity of his nature is made in his life and conversation. And this was the case of the man in our text. The vileness of his nature had broken out to the defiling of his life, and to the making of him at this time, base in conversation. This, this was it, that almost broke his heart.

He saw in this he had dishonoured God, and that cut him. *Against thee, thee only have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight.* He saw in this he had caused the enemies of God to open their mouths and blaspheme; and this cut him to the heart. This made him cry, *I have sinned against thee, Lord.* This made him say, *I will declare mine iniquity, I will be sorry for my sin.* Ps. 51. 4. Ps. 38. 18.

When a man is designed to do a matter, when his heart is set upon it, (and the broken-hearted doth design to glorify God), an obstruction to that design, the spoiling of this work, makes him sorrowful. Hannah coveted children, but could not have them, and this made her a woman of a sorrowful spirit; 1 Sam. 1. 15.

A broken-hearted man would be well inwardly, and do that which is well outwardly; but he feels, he finds, he sees, he is prevented, prevented at last in part. This makes him sorrowful; in this he groans, groans earnestly, being burdened with his imperfection; 2 Cor. 5. 1, 2, 3.

You know one with broken bones has imperfections many, and is more sensible of them too, (as was said afore, than any other man); and this makes him sorrowful, yea, and makes him conclude, *That he shall go softly all his days in the bitterness of his soul.* Ps. 38. 15.

Thirdly, The man with a broken heart is a very humble man; or, true humility is a sign of a broken heart. Hence, brokenness of heart, contrition of spirit, and humbleness, of mind, are put together. *To revive the heart of the humble, and to revive the spirit of the contrite ones.* Ps. 57. 15.

To

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follow our similitude. Suppose a man while in health, stout and strong, and one that fears no man; yet let this man have but a leg or an arm broken, and his courage is quelled; he is now so far off from hectoring of it with a man, that he is afraid of every little child that doth but offer to touch him: Now he will court the most feeble that has ought to do with him, to use him and handle him gently. Now he is become a child in courage, a child in fear, and humbleth himself as a little child.

Why, thus it is with that man that is of a broken and contrite spirit. Time was indeed he could hector even hector it with God himself, saying, *What is the Almighty, that we should serve him? Or what profit shall I have, if I keep his commandments?* Job 21. 15. Mal. 3. 13. 14.

Ay! But now his heart is broken; God has wrestled with him, and given him a fall, to the breaking of his bones, his heart; and now he crouches, now he cringes, now he begs of God, that he will not *Pf. 51. 1.* only do him good, but do it with tender hands. *Have mercy upon me, O God, said David, yea, according to the multitude of thy tender mercies, blot out my transgression.*

He stands, as he sees, not only in need of mercy, but of the tenderest mercies. God has several sorts of mercies, some rough, some more tender. God can save a man, and yet have him a dreadful way to heaven. This the broken-hearted sees, and this the broken-hearted dreads, and therefore pleads for the tenderest sort of mercies; and here we read of his gentle dealing, and that he is very pitiful, and that he deals tenderly with his. But the reason of such expressions no man knows but he that is broken-hearted; he has his sores, his running sores, his stinking sores; wherefore he is pained, and therefore covets to be handled tenderly. Thus God has broken the pride of his spirit, and humbled the loftiness of man. And his humility yet appears,

1. In his thankfulness for natural life. He reckoneth at night, when he goes to bed, that like as a lion,

so God will tear him to pieces before the morning light, Isa. 38. 13.

There is no judgement that has fallen upon others, but he counts of right he should be swallowed up by it. *My flesh trembleth for fear of thee, and I am afraid of thy judgements.*

But perceiving a day added to his life, and that he in the morning is still on this side hell, he cannot chuse but take notice of it, and acknowledge it as a special favour, saying, *God be thanked for holding my soul in life till now, and for keeping my life back from the destroyer.* Compare Job 33. 22. and Psal. 56. 13. Psal. 84. 13.

Man, before his heart is broken, counts time his own, and therefore he spends it lavishly upon every idle thing. His soul is far from fear, because the rod of God is not upon him; but when he sees himself under the wounding hand of God, or when God like a lion is breaking all his bones, then he humbleth himself before him, and falleth at his foot. Now he has learned to count every moment a mercy, and every small morsel a mercy.

2. Now also the least hopes of mercy for his soul, O how precious is it! He that was wont to make ors of the gospel, and that valued promises but as a stubble, and the words of God but as rotten wood; now, with what an eye doth he look on the promise? Yea, he counted a peradventure of merey, more rich, more worth, than the whole world. Now, as we say, he is glad to leap at a crust; now, to be a dog in God's house, is counted better by him than to *dwell in the tents of the wicked*; Matth. 15. 16, 27.; Luke 15. 17, 18, 19.

3. Now, he that was wont to look scornfully upon the people of God, yea, that used to scorn to shew them a gentle cast of his countenance; now he admires and bows before them, and is ready to lick the dust of their feet, and would count it his greatest, the highest honour, to be as one of the least of them. *Make me as one of thy hired servants*, says he; Luke 15. 19.

4. Now

4. Now he is in his own eyes the greatest fool in nature; for that he sees he has been so mistaken in his ways, and has not yet but little, if any true knowledge of God. *Every one now, says he, have more knowledge of God than I: every one serves him better than I; Pſal. 73. 21, 22.; Prov. 30. 2, 3.*

5. Now may he be but one, though the least in the kingdom of heaven! Now may he be but one, though the least in the church on earth! Now may he be but beloved, though the least beloved of saints! How high an account doth he set thereon!

6. Now when he talketh with God or men, how doth he debase himself before them! If with God, how does he accuse himself, and load himself with the acknowledgements of his own villanies, which he committed in the days wherein he was the enemy of God! Lord, said Paul, that contrite one, *I imprisoned, and did beat in every synagogue them that believe on thee: And when the blood of thy martyr Stephen was shed, I also was standing by, and consenting unto his death, and kept the raiment of them that slew him. Yea, I punished thy saints oft in every synagogue, and compelled them to blaspheme; And being exceeding mad against them, I persecuted them even unto strange cities.*

Also, when he comes to speak to saints how doth he make himself vile before them! *I am faith he, the least of the apostles; I am not meet to be called an apostle; I am less than the least of all saints; I was a blasphemer, I was a persecutor, and injurious, &c.; 1 Cor. 15. 9.; Ephes. 3. 8.; 1 Tim. 1. 13.*

What humility, what self-abasing thoughts, doth a broken heart produce! When David danced before the ark of God, also how did he discover his nakedness to the disliking of his wife; and when she taunted him for his doings, says he, *It was before the Lord, &c. and I will be yet, more vile than thus, and will be base in mine own sight.*

Oh the man that is, or that has been kindly broken in his spirit, and that this is of a contrite heart, is a lowly humble man.

Fourthly,

Fourthly, The broken-hearted man is a man that sees himself in spirituals to be poor: Therefore as humble and contrite, so poor and contrite are put together in the word: *But to this man will I look, If. 66. 1, 2. even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit.*

And here we still pursue our metaphor. A wounded man, a man with broken bones, concludes his condition to be but poor, very poor. Ask him how he does, and he answers, Truly, neighbours in a very poor condition. Also you have the spiritual poverty of such as have, or have had their hearts broken, and that have been of contrite spirits, much made mention of in the word. And they go by two names to distinguish them from others; They are called thy poor, that is God's poor; they are also called *the poor in spirit*, Psal. 72. 2.; Psal. 74. 9; Matth. 5. 3.

Now, the man that is poor in his own eyes, (for of him we now discourse, and the broken-hearted is such an one), is sensible of his wants. He knows he cannot help himself, and therefore is forced to be content to live by the charity of others. Thus it is in nature, thus it is in grace.

First, The broken-hearted now knows he wants, and he knew it not till now. As he that has a broken bone, knew no want of a bone-setter, till he knew his bone was broken; his broken bone makes him know it; his pain and anguish makes him know it; and thus it is in spirituals. Now he sees, to be poor indeed, is to want the sense of the favour of God; for his great pain is sense of wrath, as hath been shewn before. *And the voice of joy would heal Ps. 51. 8. his broken bones.*

Two things he thinks would make him rich.

1. A right and title to Jesus Christ, and all his benefits.

2. And saving faith therein. They that are spiritually rich, are rich in him, and in the faith of him, 2 Cor. 8. 9.; James 2. 5.

The first of these giveth us a right to the kingdom of heaven; and the second yields the soul the comfort of it; and the broken-hearted man wants the

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seuse and knowledge of his interest in these. That he knows he wants them is plain; but that he knows he has them is what as yet he wants the attainment of. Hence he says, *The poor and needy seek water, and there is none, and their tongue fails for thirst: There is none in their view, none in their view for them.*

Hence David, when he had his broken heart, felt he wanted washing, he wanted purging, he wanted to be made white: He knew that spiritual riches lay there, but he did not so well perceive that God had washed and purged him: Yea, he rather was afraid that all was going, that he was in danger of being cast out of God's presence, and that the spirit of grace would be utterly taken from him; See Psalm 51.

That is the first thing; The broken-hearted is poor, because he knows his wants.

Secondly, The broken-hearted is poor, because he knows he cannot help himself to what he knows he wants. The man that has a broken arm, as he knows it, so he knows of himself he cannot set it. This therefore is a second thing that declares a man is poor otherwise he is not so; For suppose a man wants never so much, yet if he can but help himself, if he can furnish himself, if he can support his own wants out of what he has, he cannot be a poor man: Yea, the more he wants, the greater are his riches, if he can supply his own wants out of his own purse.

He then is the poor man, that knows his spiritual want, and also knows he cannot supply or help himself.

But this the broken-hearted knows, therefore he in his own eyes is the only poor man. True, he may have something of his own, but that will not supply his want, and therefore he is a poor man still. I have sacrifices, says David, but thou dost not desire them, therefore my poverty remains, Psal. 51. 16.

Lead is not gold, lead is not current money with the merchants: There is none has spiritual gold to sell but Christ, Rev. 3. 18.

What can a man do to procure Christ, or procure faith or love? Yea, had he never so much of his own carnal excellencies, no, not one penny of it will go for

for pay in that market where grace is to be had. *If Song. 8. 7.*
a man will give all the substance of his house for love,
it would be utterly contemned.

This the broken-hearted man perceives, and therefore he sees himself to be spiritually poor: True, he has a broken heart, and that is of great esteem with God; but that is not of nature's goodness, that is a gift, a work of God, that is the sacrifices of God: Besides, a man cannot remain content and at rest with that; for that in the nature of it does but shew him he is poor, and that his wants are such as himself cannot supply. Besides, there is but little ease in a broken heart.

Thirdly, The broken-hearted man is poor, and sees it; because he finds he is now disabled to live any way else but by begging.

This David betook himself to, though he was a king; for he knew as to his soul's health, he could live no way else: *This poor man cried, saith he, and Ps. 38. 6,*
the Lord heard him, and saved him out of all his troubles. And this leads me to the fifth sign.

Fifthly, Another sign of a broken heart is a crying a crying out. Pain, you know, will make one cry. Go to them that have upon them the anguish of broken bones, and see if they do not cry; anguish makes them cry. This, this is that which quickly follows, if once thy heart be broken, and thy spirit indeed made contrite.

First, I say, anguish will make thee cry. *Trouble Ps. 119.*
and anguish, saith David, have taken hold upon me. 143.
 Anguish, you know, doth naturally provoke to crying; now, as a broken bone has anguish, a broken heart has anguish: Hence the pains of one that has a broken heart are compared to the pangs of a woman in travail, John 16. 20, 21, 22.

1. Anguish will make one cry alone, cry to one's self; and this is called a bemoaning of one's self. *I Jer. 31.*
have surely heard Ephraim bemoaning himself, saith God. 18.

That is, being at present under the breaking, chastising hand of God: *Thou hast chastised me, saith he, and I was chastised, as a bullock unaccustomed to the*

yoke. This is his meaning also, who said, *I mourn in my complaint, and make a noise: And why! Why, My heart is pained within me, Psal. 53. 2, 3, 4.*

This is a self-bemoaning, a bemoaning themselves in secret and retired places.

You know it is common with them who are distressed with anguish, though all alone, to cry out to themselves of their present pains, saying, *O my leg! O my arm! O my bowels! Or as the son of the Shunamite, My head! my head! O the groans, the sighs, the cries, that the broken-hearted have, when by themselves, or alone! O, say they, my sins! my sins! my soul! my soul! How am I loaden with guilt! How am I surrounded with fear! O this hard, this desperate, this unbelieving heart! O how sin defileth my will, my mind, my conscience! I am afflicted and ready to die.*

2 King¹ 4.
19.

Pf 88 15.

Could some of you carnal people but get behind the chamber-door, to hear Ephraim when he is at the work of self-bemoaning, it would make you stand amazed to hear him bewail that sin in himself in which you take delight; and to hear him bemoan his mispending of time, while you spend all in pursuing your filthy lusts; and to hear him offended with his heart, because it will not better comply with God's holy will, while you are afraid of his word and ways, and never think yourselves better than when farthest off from God. The unruliness of the passions, and lusts of the broken-hearted, make them often get into a corner, and thus bemoan themselves.

2. As they thus cry out in a bemoaning manner of and to themselves, so they have their outcries of and against themselves to others; as the said in another case, *Behold and see, if there be any sorrow like my sorrow.*

Lam. 1.
12.

O the bitter cries and complaints that the broken-hearted have, and make to one another? Still every one imagining that his own wounds are deepest, and his own sores fullest of anguish, and hardest to be cured. Say they, *If our iniquities be upon us, and we pine away in them, how can we then live? Ezek. 33. 10.*

Once being at an honest woman's house, I, after some

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some pause, asked her how she did? She said, Very badly. I asked her, If she was sick? she answered, No. What then, said I, are any of your children ill? She told me, No. What, said I, is your husband amiss, or do you go back in the world? No, no, said she, but I am afraid I shall not be saved: And broke out with heavy heart, saying, Ah, Goodman Bunyan! Christ and a pitcher; if I had Christ, though I went and begged my bread with a pitcher, it would be better with me than I think it is now.

This woman had her heart broken, this woman wanted Christ, this woman was concerned for her soul: There are but few women, rich women, that count Christ and a pitcher better than the world, their pride and pleasures. This woman's cries are worthy to be recorded; it was a cry that carried in it, not only a sense of the want, but also of the worth of Christ. This cry, Christ and a pitcher, made a melodious noise in the ears of the very angels.

But, I say, few women cry out thus; few women are so in love with their own eternal salvation, as to be willing to part with all their lusts and vanities for Jesus Christ and a pitcher. Good Jacob also was thus: *If the Lord, said he, will give me bread to eat, Gen. 28. and raiment to put on, then he shall be my God: Yea, 20.* he vowed it should be so. And Jacob vowed a vow, saying, *If God will be with me, and keep me in this way that I go, and will give me bread to eat, and raiment to put on; so that I come again to my father's house in peace: then shall the Lord be my God.*

3. As they bemoan themselves, and make their complaints to one and another, so they cry to God. *O God! said Heman, I have cried day and night to thee. Ps 88. 1,* But when? Why! when his soul was full of trouble, *2, 3.* and his life drew near to the grave. Or, as it says in *Ps 130. 1.* another place, *Out of the deep, out of the belly of Jonah 2. 2.* hell cried I. By such words expressing what painful condition they were in when they cried.

See how God himself words it; *My pleasant portion, says he, is become a desolate wilderness, and being desolate, it mourneth unto me.*

And

*Ps. 6. 1,
2, 3.*

And this also is natural to those whose hearts are broken. Whether goes the child, when it catcheth harm, but to its father, to its mother? Where doth it lay its head, but in their laps? Into whose bosom doth it pour out its complaint, more especially, but into the bosom of the father, of a mother, because there are bowels, there is pity, there is relief and succour? And thus it is with them whose bones whose hearts are broken. It is natural to them; they must cry; they cannot but cry to him. *Lord, heal me, said David, for my bones are vexed; Lord, heal me, for my soul is vexed.*

He that cannot cry, feels no pain, sees no want, fears no danger, or else is dead.

Sixthly, Another sign of a broken heart, and of a contrite spirit, is, It trembleth at God's word. *To him that is poor, and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my word; Is. 66. 2.*

The word of God is an awful word to a broken-hearted man. Solomon says, *The word of a king is as the roaring of a lion*; and if so, what is the word of God? (for by the wrath and fear, is meant the authoritative word of a king).

We have a proverb, The burnt child dreads the fire; the whipped child fears the rod: even so the broken-hearted fears the word of God. Hence you have a remark set upon them that tremble at God's word, to wit, They are they that keep among the godly; they are they that keep within compass; they are they that are aptest to mourn, and to stand in the gap, when God is angry; and to turn away his wrath from a people.

It is a sign the word of God has had place, and wrought powerfully, when the heart trembleth at it, is afraid, and stands in awe of it. When Joseph's mistress tempted him to lie with her, he was afraid of the word of God: *How shall I do this great wickedness, said he, and sin against God?* He stood in awe of God's word, durst not do it, because he kept in remembrance, what a dreadful thing it was to rebel against God's word. When old Eli heard that

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the ark was taken, his very heart trembled within him; for he read by that sad loss, that God was angry with Israel, and he knew the anger of God was a great and terrible thing. When Samuel went to Bethlehem, the elders of the town trembled; for they feared that he came to them with some sad message from God, and they had had experience of the dread of such things before; Gen. 39. 7, 8, 9.; 1 Sam. 4. 13.; chap. 16. 1, 2, 3, 4.

When Ezra would have a mourning in Israel for the sins of the land, he sent, *and there came to him* **Ezra 9. 4** *every one that trembled at the words of the God of Isaac, because of the transgressions of those that had been carried away.*

There are, I say, a sort of people that tremble at the words of God, and that are afraid of doing ought that is contrary to them; but they are only such with whose souls and spirits the word has had to do. For the rest, they are resolved to go on their course, let God say what he will. *As for the word of the* **Jer 44. 16** *Lord, said rebellious Israel to Jeremiah, which thou hast spoken to us in the name of the Lord, we will not hearken unto it: But we will do whatsoever thing goeth out of our own mouth. But do you think, that these people did ever feel the power and majesty of the word of God, to break their hearts? No, verily; had that been so, they would have trembled at the words of God; they would have been afraid of the words of God. God may command some people what he will, they'll do what they list. What care they for God? what care they for his word? Neither threats nor promises, neither punishments or favours will make them obedient to the word of God; and all because they have not felt the power of it, their hearts have not been broken with it. When King Josias did but read in God's book what punishment God had threatened against rebellious Israel; though he himself was a holy and good man, he humbled himself, he rent his cloaths, and wept before the Lord, and was afraid of the judgement threatened; 2 Kings 22.; 2 Chron. 34.*

For

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For he knew what a dreadful thing the word of God is. Some men, as I said before, dare do any thing, let the word of God be never so much against it; but they that tremble at the word, dare not do so. No, they must make the word their rule for all they do; they must go to the Holy Bible, and there inquire what may or may not be done; for they tremble at the word.

This then is another sign, a true sign, that the heart has been broken, namely, *When the heart is made afraid of, and trembleth at the word.*

30. Trembling at the word, is caused by a belief of what is deserved, threatened, and of what will come, if not prevented by repentance; and therefore the heart melts, and breaks before the Lord.

I come, in the next place, to speak to this question.

But what necessity is there that the heart must be broken? Cannot a man be saved unless his heart be broken?

I answer, Avoiding secret things, which only belong to God, there is a necessity of breaking the heart, in order to salvation; because a man will not sincerely comply with the means conducing thereunto, until his heart is broken. For,

First, Man, take him as he comes into the world, as to spirituals, as to evangelical things, in which mainly lies man's eternal felicity, and there he is as one dead, and so stupified, and wholly in himself, as unconcerned with it. Nor can any call nor admonition, that has not a heart-breaking power attending of it, bring him to a due consideration of his present state, and so unto an effectual desire to be saved.

Many ways God has manifested this:

He has threatened men with temporal judgements; yea, sent such judgements upon them, once and again, over and over, but they will not do. What?

Amos 4.6. says he, *I have given you cleanness of teeth in all your cities; I have withholden the rain from you; I have smitten you with blasting and mildew; I have sent among you the pestilence; I have overthrown some of you, as God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah:*

Yet

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Yet have ye not returned unto me, saith the Lord.

See here! Here is judgement upon judgement, stroke after stroke, punishment after punishment, but all will not do, unless the heart is broken. Yea, another prophet seems to say, that such things, instead of converting the soul, fet it further off. If heart-breaking work attend not such strokes, *Why should ye be stricken any more?* says he, *ye will revolt more and more.* *Isa. 1. 5.*

Man's heart is fenced, it is grown gross; there is a skin that, like a coat of mail, has wrapped it up, and inclosed in on every side. This skin, this coat of mail, unless it be cut off and taken away, the heart remains untouched, whole; and so as unconcerned, whatever judgements or afflictions light upon the body; *Matt. 13. 15.; Acts 28. 27.*

This which I call the coat of mail, the fence of the heart, has two great names in scripture. It is called, the *foreskin of the heart*, and the *armour in which the devil trusteth*; *Deut. 10. 16. Luke 11. 22.*

Because these shield and fence the heart from all gospel-doctrine, and from all legal punishments; nothing can come at it till these are removed. Therefore, in order unto conversion, the heart is said to be circumcised: that is, this foreskin is taken away, and this coat of mail is spoiled. *I will circumcise thy heart,* *Deut. 30. 6.* saith he, *to love the Lord thy God with all thy heart,* (and then the devil's goods are spoiled), *that thou mayst live.* *Luke 11. 22.*

And now the heart lies open, now the word will prick, cut, and pierce it; and it being cut, -pricked, and pierced, it bleeds, it faints, it falls, and dies at the foot of God, unless it is supported by the grace and love of God in Jesus Christ.

Conversion, you know, begins at the heart; but if the heart be so secured by sin and Satan, as I have said, all judgements are, while that is so, in vain. Hence, Moses, after he had made a long relation of mercy and judgement unto the children of Israel, suggests, that yet the great thing was wanting to them; and that thing was, *an heart to perceive, and eyes to see, and ears to hear unto that day.* *Deut. 29. 2, 3*

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Their hearts were as yet not touched to the quick, were not awakened, and wounded by the holy word of God, and made to tremble at its truth and terror.

But, I say, before the heart be touched, pricked, made smart, &c. how can it be thought, be the danger never so great, that it should repent, cry, bow, and break at the foot of God, and supplicate there for mercy? and yet thus it must do; for thus God has ordained, and thus God has appointed it; nor can men be saved without it.

But, I say, Can a man spiritually dead, a stupid man, whose heart is past feeling, do this, before he has his dead and stupid heart awakened, to see and feel its state and misery without it? But,

Secondly, Man, take him as he comes into the world, (and how wise soever he is in worldly and temporal things), he is yet a fool as to that which is spiritual and heavenly. Hence, he says, the natural man receiveth not the things that are of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness to him, (because he is indeed a fool to them); *neither, says the text, can he know them, for they are spiritually discerned.*

1 Cor. 21.
4.

But, how now must this fool be made wise? Why! wisdom must be put into his heart, Job 38. 36.

Now, none can put it there but God; and how doth he put it there, but by making room there for it, by taking away the thing which hinders, which is that folly and madness which naturally dwelleth there? But how does he take that away but by a severe chastising of his soul for it, until he has made him weary of it? The whip and stripes are provided for the natural fool, and so it is for him that is spiritually so, Prov. 19. 29.

Solomon intimates, that it is a hard thing to make a fool become wise. *Though thou shouldst bray a fool in a mortar among wheat with a pestle, yet will not his foolishness depart from him.*

Prov. 27.
22.

By this it appears, that it is a hard thing to make a fool a wise man. To bray one in a mortar is a dreadful thing, to bray one there with a pestle; and yet

yet

yet it seems a whip, a mortar, and a pestle is the way. And if this is the way to make one wise in this world, and if all this will hardly do, how must the fool that is so in spirituals, be whipped and beaten, and stripped before he is made wise therein? Yea, his heart must be put into God's mortar, and must be beaten; yea, brayed there with the pestle of the law, before it loves to hearken unto heavenly things. It is a great word in Jeremiah, *Through deceit* (that is, folly) *they refuse to know me, saith the Lord.* And what follows? Why, *Therefore, thus saith the Lord, behold I will melt them, and try them,* (that is, with fire), *for how shall I do for the daughter of my people:*

Jer. 9. 6, 7.

I will melt them: I will put them into my furnace and there will I try them; and there I will make them know me, saith the Lord. When David was under spiritual chastisement for his sin, and had his heart under the breaking hand of God, then he said, *Pf. 51. 6. God should make him know wisdom.*

Now he was in the mortar, now he was in the furnace, now he was bruised and melted; yea, now his bones, his heart was breaking, and now his folly was departing. Now, says he, thou shalt make me to know wisdom, If I know any thing of the way of God with us fools, there is nothing else will make us wise men; yea, a thousand breakings will not make us so wise as we should be.

We say, wisdom is not good till it is bought: and he that buys it, according to the intention of that proverb, usually smarts for it. The fool is wise in his own conceit; wherefore there is a double difficulty attends him, before he can be wise indeed. Not only his folly, but his wisdom must be removed from him; and how shall that be, but by ripping up of his heart by some sore conviction, that may shew him plainly, that his wisdom is his folly, and that which will undo him. A fool loves his folly; that is, as treasure, so much is he in love with it. Now, then, it must be a great thing that must make a fool forsake his folly. The foolish will not weigh, nor consider, nor compare wisdom with their folly. *Folly*

*Prov. 15. is joy to him that is destitute of wisdom: As a dog re-
 21. & 26. turneth to his vomit, so a fool returneth to his folly.
 11. So loth are they when driven from it, to let it go, to
 let it depart from them.*

Wherefore there must go a great deal to the making of a man a Christian : for as to that, every man is a fool, yea the greatest fool, the most unconcerned fool, the most self-willed fool of all fools ; yea, one that will not be turned from his folly, but by the breaking of his heart : David was one of these fools ; Manasseh was one of these fools ; Saul, otherwise called Paul, was one of these fools ; and so was I, and that the biggest of all.

Thirdly, Man, take him as he comes into the world, and he is not only a dead man, and a fool, but a proud man also. Pride is one of those sins that first sheweth itself in children, yea, and it grows up with them, and mixeth itself with all they do : but it lies most hid, most deep in man as to his soul-concerns. For the nature of sin, as sin is not only to be vile, but to hide its vileness from the soul. Hence many think they do well when they sin. Jonah thought he did well to be angry with God. The Pharisees thought they did well when they said, Christ had a devil ; and Paul thought verily, that he ought to do many things against, or contrary to the name of Jesus ; which he also did with great madness ; Jonah 4. 9 ; John 8. 48 ; Acts 26. 9, 10.

And thus sin puffs up men with pride, and a conceit of themselves, that they are a thousand times better than they are. Hence they think they are the children of God, when they are the children of the devil ; and that they are something as to Christianity when they neither are such, nor know what it is that they must have to make them such ; John 8. 41, 42, 43, 44. ; Gal. 6. 3.

Now, whence flows this but from pride, and a self-conceit of themselves, and that their state is good for another world, when they are yet in their sins, and under the curse of God ? yea, and this pride is so strong and high, and yet so hid in them, that all the ministers

ministers in the world cannot persuade them that this is pride, not grace, in which they are so confident.

Hence they slight all reproofs, rebukes, threatnings, or admonitions that are pressed upon them, to prevail with them to take heed, that they be not herein deceived. *Hear ye, saith the prophet, and give ear: Jer. 13. be not proud, for the Lord hath spoken. And if ye will, 15 & 43. not hear it, my soul shall weep in secret for your pride. 2.*

And what was the conclusion? Why, all the proud men stood out still, and maintained their resistance of God and his holy prophet.

Nor is there any thing that will prevail with these to the saving of their souls, until their hearts are broken. David, after he had defiled Bathsheba, and slain her husband, yet boasted himself in his justice and holiness, and would by all means have the man put to death, that had but taken the poor man's lamb, when, alas! poor soul, himself was the great transgressor. But would he believe it? No, no; he stood upon the vindicating of himself to be a just doer; nor would he be made to fall, until Nathan, by authority from God, did tell him, that he was the man whom himself had condemned; *Thou art the man, said he: 2Sam. 12.* at which word his conscience was awakened, his heart wounded, and so his soul made to fall under the burden of his guilt, at the feet of the God of heaven for mercy.

Ah! pride, pride! thou art that which holds many a man in the chains of his sins; thou art it, thou cursed self-conceit, that keepest them from believing that their state is damnable. *The wicked, through Ps. 10. 4. the pride of his countenance, will not seek after God.* And if there is so much in the pride of his countenance what is there, think you, in the pride of his heart?

Therefore Job says, It is to hide pride from man, and so to save his soul from hell, that God chasteneth him with pain upon his bed, until the multitude of his bones stick out, and until his life draws nigh to the destroyer, Job 33. 17 — 22.

It is an hard thing to take a man off of his pride, and make him, instead of trusting in, and boasting of his

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his goodness, wisdom, honesty, and the like, to see himself a sinner, a fool, yea a man that is cruel, as to his own immortal soul.

Pride of heart has a power in it, and is therefore compared to an iron sinew, and an iron chain, by which they are made stout, and with which they are held in that stoutness, to oppose the Lord, and drive his word from their hearts; Lev. 26. 19.; Ps. 73. 6.

This was the sin of devils, and it is the sin of man and the sin, I say, from which no man can be delivered until his heart is broken; and then his pride is spoiled, then he will be glad to yield.

If a man be proud of his strength or manhood, a broken leg will maul him; and if a man be proud of his goodness, a broken heart will maul him; because, as has been said, a broken heart comes by the discovery and charge of sin, by the power of God upon the conscience.

Fourthly, Man take him as he comes into the world, and he is not only a dead man, a fool, and proud, but also self-willed and head strong; 2 Pet. 2. 10.

A stubborn ungain creature is man before his heart is broken. Hence they are so often called rebels, rebellious, and disobedient; they will only do what they list. *All day long*, says God, *have I stretched out my hand to a disobedient and gainsaying people.*

And hence, again, they are compared to a self-willed or head-strong horse, that will, in spite of his rider, *Jer. 8. 16.* rush into the battle. *Every one*, says God, *turneth to his course, and as the horse rusheth into the battle.* *Psa. 12. 4.* They say, *With our tongues we will prevail, our lips are our own; who is lord over us.*

Hence they are said to stop their ears, to pull away their shoulder, to shut their eyes, and harden their hearts, against the words of God, and to *contemn the counsel of the Most High*; Zech. 7. 10, 12.; Ps. 107. 11.

They are fitly compared to the rebellious son, who would not be ruled by his parents, or to the prodigal, who would have all in his own hand, and remove himself far away from father and father's house; Deut 21. 20.; Luke 15. 13.

Now for such creatures, nothing will do but violence,

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lence. The stubborn son must be stoned till he dies; and the prodigal must be famished out of all: nothing else I say will do. Their self-willed stubborn heart will not comply with the will of God before it is broken; Deut. 21. 21.; Luke 15. 14,—17.

These are they that are called the stout-hearted; these are said to be far from righteousness, and so will remain until their hearts are broken; for so they must be made to know themselves; Isa. 9. 9, 10, 11.

Fifthly, Man, as he comes into the world, is not only a dead man, a fool, proud, and self-willed, but also a fearless creature. *There is, saith the text, no fear of God before their eyes.* Rom. 3. 18.

No fear of God. There is fear of man, fear of losing his favour, his love, his good-will, his help, his friendship; this is seen every where. How do the poor fear the rich, the weak fear the strong, and those that are threatened, them that threaten? But come now to God, why, none fears him; that is, by nature, none reverence him; they neither fear his frowns, nor seek his favour, nor inquire how they may escape his revenging hand that is lifted up against their sins and their souls because of sin. Little things they fear the losing of them; but the soul they are not afraid to lose. *They fear not me, saith the Lord.* Mal. 3. 5.

How many times are some men put in mind of death by sickness upon themselves, by graves, by the death of others?

How many times are they put in mind of hell, by reading the word, by lashes of conscience, and by some that go roaring in despair out of this world?

How many times are they put in mind of the day of judgement? As,

1. By God's binding the fallen angels over to judgement.

2. By the drowning of the old world; 2 Pet. 2. 4, 5.; Jude 7.

3. By the burning of Sodom and Gomorrah with fire from heaven; 2 Pet. 2. 6.; Jude 7.

4. By appointing a day; Acts 18. 29, 30, 31.

5. By appointing a judge; Acts 10. 40, 41, 42.

6. By

6. By reserving their crimes in records ; Isa. 30. 8.
Rev. 20. 12.

7. By appointing and preparing of witnesses ; Rom.
2. 15.

8. And by promising, yea threatning, yea resolving to call the whole world to his bar, there to be judged for all which they have done and said, and for every secret thing ; Matth. 25. 32, 33. ; & 12. 36. ; Eccles. 11. 9. ; & 12. 14.

And yet they fear not God : alas ! they believe not these things. These things, to carnal men, are like Lot's preaching to his sons and daughters that were in Sodom. When he told them, that God would destroy that place, he seemed unto them as one that mocked ; and his words to them were as idle tales ; Gen. 19. 14.

Fearless men are not won by words ; blows, wounds, and killings, are the things that must bring them under fear. How many struggling fits had Israel with God in the wilderness ? How many times did they declare, that there they feared him not ? And observe, they were seldom, if ever, brought to fear and dread his glorious name, unless he beset them round with death and the grave. Nothing, nothing but a severe hand, will make the fearless fear. Hence, to speak after the manner of men, God is put upon it to go this way with sinners when he would save their souls ; even bring them, and lay them at the mouth, and within sight of hell and everlasting damnation : and there also charge them with sin and guilt, to the breaking of their hearts, before they will fear his name.

Sixthly, Man, as he comes into the world, is not only a dead man, a fool, proud, self-willed, and fearless, but he is a false believer concerning God. Let God report of himself never so plainly, man by nature will not believe this report of him : No, they are become vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart is darkened ; wherefore they turn the glory of God, which is his truth, into a lie, Rom. 1. 21.—25.

God says, He sees ; they say, He seeth not : God saith, He knows ; they say, He doth not know : God saith,

faith, None is like himself; yet they say, He is altogether like to them: God saith, None shall keep his door for nought; they say, It is in vain, and to no profit to serve him: He saith, He will do good; they say, He will neither do good nor evil, Job 22. 13, 14.; Psal. 50. 21.; Job 21. 14, 15.; Mal. 3. 14.; Zeph. 1. 12.

Thus they falsely believe concerning God; yea, as to the word of his grace, and the revelation of his mercy in Christ, they stick not to say by their practice, (for a wicked man *speakeeth with his feet*, Prov. 6. 13.), that that is a stark lie, and not to be trusted to, 1 John 5. 10.

Now, what shall God do to save these men? If he hides himself, and conceals his glory, they perish: If he sends to them by his messengers, and forbears to come to them himself, they perish: If he comes to them, and forbears to work upon them by his word, they perish; If he worketh on them, but not effectually, they perish: If he works effectually, he must break their hearts, and make them, as men wounded to death, fall at his feet for mercy, or there can be no good done on them; they will not rightly believe, until he fires them out of their misbelief, and makes them to know, by the breaking of their bones for their false faith, that he is, and will be what he has said of himself in his holy word. The heart, therefore, must be broken, before the man can come to God.

Seventhly, Man, as he comes into the world, is not only a dead man, a fool, proud, self-willed, fearless, and a false believer, but a great lover of sin: he is captivated, ravished, drowned in the delights of it: Hence it says, They love sin, delight in lies, do take pleasure in iniquity, and in them that do it; that they sport themselves in their own deceivings, and glory in their shame, John 3. 9. 12.; Psal. 62. 4.; Rom. 1. 32.; 2 Pet. 2. 13.; Phil. 3. 19.

This is the temper of man by nature; for sin is mixed with and has the mastery of all the powers of his soul: Hence they are said to be captives to it, and

to be led captive into the pleasures of it, at the will of the devil, 2 Tim. 2. 26.

And you know it is not an easy thing to break love, or to take the affections off of that object on which they are so deeply set, in which they are so deeply rooted, as man's heart is in his sins. *Alas!* how many are there that contemn all the allurements of heaven, and that trample upon all the threatenings of God, and that say, *Tush,* at all the flames of hell, whenever they are propounded as motives to work them off their sinful delights! so fixed are they, so mad are they, upon these beastly idols: Yea, he that shall take in hand to stop their course in this their way, is as he that shall attempt to prevent the raging waves of the sea from their course, when driven by the mighty winds.

When men are somewhat put to it, when reason and conscience shall begin a little to hearken to a preacher, or a judgement that shall begin to hunt for iniquity, how many tricks, evasions, excuses, demurs, delays, and hiding-holes, will they make, invent, find, to hide and preserve their sweet sins with themselves and their souls, in the delights of them, to their own eternal perdition! Hence they endeavour to stifle conscience, to choke convictions, to forget God, to make themselves Atheists, to contradict preachers that are plain and honest, and to heap to themselves such of them only as are like themselves,

If. 30
—11.

8. *That speak unto them smooth things, and prophesy deceits; yea, they say themselves to such preachers, Get ye out of the way; turn aside out of the path; cause the Holy One of Israel to cease from before us.*

If they be followed still, and conscience and guilt shall, like blood-hounds, find them out in their secret places, and roar against them for their wicked lives, then they will flatter, cogg, dissemble, and lie against their souls, promising to mend, to turn, to repent, and grow better shortly; and all to daff off convictions and molestations in their wicked ways, that they may yet pursue their lusts, their pleasures, and sinful delights, in quiet, and without controul.

Yea,

Yea, further, I have known some that have been made to roar like bears, to yell like dragons, and to howl like dogs, by reason of the weight of guilt; and the lashes of hell upon their conscience for their evil deeds; who have, so soon as their present torments and fears were gone, returned again with the dog to his vomit; or as the sow that was washed, to her wallowing in the mire, Ho 7. 14.; 2 Pet. 2. 20, 21, 22.

Once again, Some have been made to taste of the good word of God, of the joy of heaven, and of the powers of the world to come; and yet could not by any one, nay, by all of these, be made to break their league for ever with their lusts and sins, Heb. 6. 1, —5.; Luke 8. 13.; John 5. 33, 34, 35.

O Lord! What is man, that thou art mindful of him? Wherein is he to be accounted of? He has sinned against thee; he loves his sins more than thee. He is a lover of pleasures more than he is a lover of God.

But now, how shall this man be reclaimed from this sin? How shall he be brought, wrought, and made, to be out of love with it? Doubtless it can be by no other means, by what we can see in the word, but by the wounding, breaking, and disabling of the heart that loves it; and by that means making it a plague and gall unto it. Sin may be made an affliction, and as gall and wormwood to them that love it; but the making of it so bitter a thing to such a man, will not be done but by great and sore means. I remember we had in our town, some time since, a little girl, that loved to eat the heads of foul tobacco-pipes, and neither rod nor good word could reclaim her, and make her leave them: So her father takes advice of a doctor, to wean her from them; and it was this: Take, saith he, a great many of the foulest tobacco-pipe heads you can get, and boil them in milk, and make a posset of that milk, and make your daughter drink the posset-drink up. He did so, and gave his girl it, and made her drink it up; the which became to irksome and nauseous to her stomach, and

made her so sick, that she could never abide to meddle with tobacco-pipe-heads any more, and so was cured of that disease.

Thou lovest thy sin, and neither rod nor good words will as yet reclaim thee. Well, take heed; if thou wilt not be reclaimed, God will make thee a posset of them, which shall be so bitter to thy soul, so irksome to thy taste, so loathsome to thy mind, and so afflicting to thy heart, that it shall break it with sickness and grief, till it be loathsome to thee. I say, thus he will do if he loves thee; if not, he will suffer thee to take thy course, and will let thee go on with thy tobacco-pipe-heads.

The children of Israel will have flesh, must have flesh; they weep, cry, and murmur, because they have not flesh; the bread of heaven, that is but light and sorry stuff in their esteem, Numb. 1. 2,—6.

Moses goes and tells God how the people despised his heavenly bread, and how they longed, lusted, and desired to be fed with flesh. Well, says God, they shall have flesh, they shall have their fill of flesh; I will feed them with it; they shall have to the
*Num. 11. full; and that, Not for a day, or two days, or five
 11—20. days, neither ten days, nor twenty days; but even a whole month, until it come out at their nostrils, and it be loathsome unto them; because they have despised the Lord.*

He can tell how to make that loathsome to thee on which thou most dost set thine evil heart: And he will do so, if he loves thee; else, as I said, he will not make thee sick by finiting of thee, nor punish thee for or when thou committest whoredom, but will let thee alone till the judgement-day, and call thee to a reckoning for all thy sins then. But to pass this,

Eighthly, Man, as he comes into the world, is not only a dead man, a fool, proud, self-willed, fearless, a false believer, and a lover of sin; but a wild man: He is of the wild olive-tree, of that which is wild by nature, Rom. 11. 17, 24.

So, in another place, man by nature is compared

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to the ass, to a wild ass: *For vain or empty man Job 11. 12. would be wise, though man be born as a wild ass's colt.*

Isaac was a figure of Christ, and of all converted men, Gal. 4. 28.

But Ishmael was a figure of man by nature; and the Holy Ghost, as to that, saith this of him: *And Gen. 16. he will be a wild man.* This man, I say, was a figure¹², of all carnal men in their wildness, or estrangedness from God: Hence it is said of the prodigal, at his conversion, That he came to himself then; implying, that he was mad, wild, or out of his wits before, Luke 15. 17.

I know there is a difference sometimes betwixt one's being wild and mad; yet sometimes wildness arriveth to that degree, as to give one rightly the denomination of being mad: And it is always true in spirituals; namely, that he that is wild, as to God, is mad, or besides himself, and so not capable, before he is tamed, of minding his own eternal good as he should.

There are these several things that are tokens of one wild or mad; and they all meet in a carnal man.

1. A wild or mad man gives no heed to good counsel; the frenzy of his head shuts all out, and by its force leads him away from men that are wise and sober: And thus it is with carnal men; good counsel is to them as pearls are that are cast afore swine; it is trampled under foot of them, and the man is despised that brings it. *The poor man's wisdom is despised, and his words are not heard, Matth. 7. 6.; Eccl. 9. 16.*

2. A wild or mad man, let him alone, and he will greatly busy himself all his life to accomplish that which, when it is completed, amounts to nothing. The work, the toil, the travel of such an one, comes to nothing, save to declare that he was out of his wits that did it. David, imitating of such an one, scrabbled upon the gate of the king, as fools do with chalk; and like to this is all the work of all carnal men in the world, 1 Sam. 21. 12, 13.

Hence, such an one is said to labour for the wind, or for what will amount to no more, than if he filled his

his

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his belly with the east wind, Eccles. 5. 16.; Job 15. 2.

3. A wild or mad man, if you set him to do any thing, and he does it, he will yet do it, not by or according to your bidding, but after the folly of his own wild fancy; even as Jehu executed the commandment of the Lord; he did it in his own madness, taking no heed to the commandment of the Lord, 2 Kings 9. 20.; chap. 10. 31.

And thus do carnal men do, when they meddle with any of God's matters, as hearing, praying, reading, professing; they do all according to their own wild fancy; they take no heed to do these after the commandment of the Lord.

4. Wild or mad men, if they deck or array themselves with ought, as many times they do, why, the spirit of their wildness or frenzy appears even in the mode and way in which they do it. Either the things themselves, which they make use of for that purpose, are very toys and trifles; or if they seem to be better, they are put on after an antic manner, rather to the rendering of them ridiculous, than to bespeak them sober, judicious, or wise; and so do natural men array themselves with what they would be accepted in with God. Would one in his wits think to make himself fine or acceptable to men, by arraying himself in menstrous cloaths, or by painting his face with dross and dung? And yet this is the finery of carnal men, when they approach for acceptance into the presence of God, Isa. 64. 6.; Phil. 3. 7, 8.

O the wildness! the frenzy! the madness! that possesses the heart and mind of carnal men! they walk according to the course of this world, according to or after that spirit which is in truth the spirit of the devil, which worketh in the children of disobedience, Eph. 2. 1, 2, 3.

But, do they believe that thus it is with them? No they are in their own accounts, as other madmen are, the only ones in the world; Hence they are so taken and tickled with their own frantic notions, and deride all else that dwell in the world.

But which is the way to make one that is wild, or

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a madman, sober? To let him alone will not do it; to give him good words only will not do it; no, he must be tamed; means must be used to tame him. He brought down their hearts with labour, or with continual molestation; as you have it, Psal. 107. 10, 11, 12. He speaketh there of madmen that are kept up in darkness, and bound in affliction and irons, because they rebelled against the words of God, and contemned the counsel of the Most High.

This, therefore is the way to deal with such, and none but God can so deal with them: They must be taken, they must be separated from men; they must be laid in chains, in darkness, afflictions, and irons; they must be blooded, half-starved, whipped, purged, and be dealt with as mad people are dealt with: And thus they must be dealt with till they come to themselves, and cry out in their distresses: And then they cry to the Lord in their troubles, and he saveth them out of their distresses; then he brings them out of darkness, and the shadow of death, and breaks their bands in sunder, Psal. 107. 13, 14, 15.

Thus, I say, God tames the wild, and brings mad prodigals to themselves, and so to him for mercy.

Ninthly, Man, as he comes into the world, is not only a dead man, a fool, proud, self-willed, fearless, a false believer, a lover of sin, and a wild man; but a man that disrelishes the things of the kingdom of God. I told you before, that unconverted man is such as did not taste things; but now I add, that he disrelishes things; he calls bitter things sweet, and sweet bitter; he judges quite amiss. These are they that God threateneth with a wo. *Wo to them that Is. 5. 20. call evil good, and good evil; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness, that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter.*

This latter part of this text shews us evidently, that the things of God are disrelished by some. They call his sweet things bitter, and the devil's bitter things sweet; and all this is for want of a broken heart. A broken heart relishes otherwise than an whole or unbroken one doth.

A man that has no pain, or bodily distress, cannot find or feel virtue or good in the most sovereign plaister, were it applied to arm or leg ; no, he rather says, Away with these stinking daubing things. O ! but lay the same plaisters where there is need and the patient will relish, and taste, and savour the goodness of them yea, will prize and commend them to others.

Thus it is in spirituals. The world, they know not what the anguish or pain of a broken heart means ; they say, *Who will shew us any good*, that is, better than we find in our sports, pleasures, estates, and preferments. *There may be many*, says the psalmist, speak after this sort : But what says the distressed man ? Why, *Lord lift thou up the light of thy countenance upon us* ; And then adds, *Thou hast put gladness in our heart* ; namely, by the light of thy countenance, for that is the plaister for a broken heart. *Thou hast put gladness in our hearts, more than in the time that their corn and their wine increaseth.*

*Pf. 4. 1,
6, 7.*

O ! a broken heart can savour pardon, can savour the consolations of the Holy Ghost : Yea, as a hungry or thirsty man prizes bread and water in the want thereof, so do the broken in heart prize and set an high esteem on the things of the Lord Jesus : His flesh, his blood, his promise, and the light of his countenance, are the only sweet things both to scent and taste, to those that are of a wounded spirit. The full soul loatheth the honey-comb ; the whole despise the gospel, they savour not the things that are of God :

If twenty men were to hear a pardon read, and but one of those twenty were condemned to die, and the pardon was for none but such ; which of these men, think you, would taste the sweetness of that pardon, they who are not, or he that was condemned ? The condemned man, doubtless.

This is the case in hand : The broken in heart is a condemned man : yea, it is sense of condemnation, with other things, that has indeed broken his heart : nor is there any thing but sense of forgiveness that can bind it up, or heal it. But could that heal it, could

could he not taste, truly taste, or rightly relish this forgiveness? No; forgiveness would be to him, as it is to him that has not sense of the want of it.

But, I say, what is the reason some so prize what others so despise, since they both stand in need of the same grace and mercy of God in Christ? Why, the one sees, and the other sees nothing, of this woful miserable state. And thus have I shewed you the necessity of a broken heart.

1. Man is dead, and must be quickened.
2. Man is a fool, and must be made wise.
3. Man is proud, and must be humbled.
4. Man is self-willed, and must be broken.
5. Man is fearless, and must be made to consider.
6. Man is a false believer, and must be rectified.
7. Man is a lover of sin, and must be weaned from it.
8. Man is wild, and must be tamed.
9. Man disrelishes the things of God, and can take no savour in them, until his heart is broken.

And thus have I done with this, and shall come next to the reasons of the point, namely, to shew you, why or how it comes to pass, that a broken heart, a heart truly contrite, is to God such an excellent thing.

That to him it is so, we have proved by six demonstrations; what it is, we have shewed by the six signs thereof; that it must be, is manifest by those nine reasons but now urged; and why it is with God or in his esteem an excellent thing, that is shewn by that which follows.

First, A broken heart is the handy-work of God; an heart of his own preparing, for his own service; it is a sacrifice of his own providing, of his providing for himself; as Abraham said in another case, *God will provide himself a lamb.* Gen. 22. 8.

Hence it is said, *The preparation of the heart of man, &c. is from the Lord.* And again, *God maketh my heart soft, and the Almighty troubleth me.* Job 23. 16.

The heart, as it is by nature hard, stupid, and impenetrable, so it remains, and so will remain, until God, as was said, *bruisseth it with his hammer, and melts it with his fire.*

Ez. 26. The stony nature of it is therefore said to be taken away of God. I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and will give you, saith he, an heart of flesh.

I will take away the stony heart, or the stoniness, or the hardness of your heart, and I will give you an heart of flesh; that is, I will make your heart sensible soft, yielding, governable, and penitent. Sometimes he bids men to rend their hearts, not because they can, but to convince them rather, that though it must be so, they cannot do it; so he bids them make themselves a new heart, and a new spirit, for the same purpose also; for if God doth not rend it, it remains unrent; if God makes it not new, it abides an old one still.

This is that that is meant, by his bending of men for himself, and of his working in them that which is pleasing in his sight, *Zech. 9. 13.*

Prov. 30. The heart, soul, or spirit, as in itself, as it came from God's fingers, is a precious thing, a thing in God's account worth more than all the world. This heart, soul, or spirit, sin has hardened, the devil has bewitched, the world has deceived. This heart, thus beguiled, God coveteth and desireth: My son, 26. saith he, give me thy heart, and let thine eyes observe my way.

This man cannot do this thing: for that his heart has the mastery of him, and will not but carry him after all manner of vanity. What now must be done? Why, God must take the heart by storm, by power, and bring it to a compliance with the word; but the heart of itself will not; it is deluded, carried away to another than God. Wherefore God now betakes him to his sword, and brings down the heart with labour, opens it, and drives out the strong man armed that did keep it; wounds it; and makes it smart for its rebellion, that it may cry; so he rectifies it for himself. *Job 5. 18. He maketh sore, and bindeth up; he woundeth, and his hands make whole.*

Thus having wrought it for himself, it becomes his habitation,

habitation, his dwelling-place: *That Christ might dwell in your heart by faith.*

But I would not swerve from the thing in hand. I have told you a broken heart is the handy-work of God, a sacrifice of his own preparing; a material fitted for himself.

1. By breaking of the heart he openeth it, and makes it a receptacle for the graces of his Spirit; that is the cabinet, when unlocked, where God lays up the jewels of the gospel; there he put his fear; *I will put my fear in their heart*; there he writes his law; *I will write my law in their heart*; there he puts his spirit: *I will put my Spirit within you*, Jer. 31. 34, 32, 33. ch. 32. 39, 40, 41. Ezek. 36. 26, 27.

The heart, I say, God chuses for his cabinet: there he hides his treasure; there is the seat of justice, mercy, and of every grace of God; I mean, when it is broken, made contrite; and so regulates by the holy word.

2. The heart when broken, is like sweet gums and spices when beaten; for as such cast their fragrant scent into the nostrils of men, so the heart when broken casts its sweet smell in the nostrils of God. The incense, which was a type of prayer of old, was to be beaten or bruised, and so to be burned in the censer. The heart must be beaten or bruised, and then the sweet scent will come out: even groans, and cries, and sighs, for the mercy of God; which cries, &c. to him, are a very excellent thing, and pleasing in his nostrils.

Secondly, A broken heart is in the sight of God an excellent thing; because a broken heart is submissive; it falleth before God, and giveth to him his glory. All this is true from a multitude of scriptures, which I need not here mention. Hence such an heart is called an honest heart, a good heart, a perfect heart, a heart fearing God, and such as is found in God's statutes.

Now, this cannot but be an excellent thing, if we consider, that by such a heart, unfeigned obedience is yielded unto him that calleth for it. *You have obey-* Rom. 6.

ed from the heart, says Paul to them at Rome, that form of doctrine which was delivered unto you.

Alas! the heart, before it is broken and made contrite, it quite of another temper: *It is not subject to the law of God; neither indeed can be.* The great stir before the heart is broken, is about who shall be Lord, God or the sinner. True, the right of dominion is the Lord's; but the sinner will not suffer it, but will be all himself; *saying who is Lord over us?* and again, say they to God, *We are Lords, we will come no more unto thee,* Psal. 12. 4. Jer. 2. 31.

This is also evident by their practice; God may say what he will, but they will do what they list. Keep my sabbath, says God; I will not, says the sinner. Leave your whoring, says God; I will not, says the sinner. Do not tell lies, nor swear, nor curse, nor blaspheme my holy name, says God; O but I will, says the sinner. Turn to me, says God; I will not, says the sinner. The right of dominion is mine, says God; but, like that young rebel, 1 Kings 1. 5. I will be king, says the sinner. Now, this is intolerable, this is insufferable, and every sinner by practice says thus; for they have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God.

Here can be no concord, no communion, no agreement, no fellowship. Here, is enmity on the one side, and flaming justice on the other, 2 Cor. 6. 14, 15, 16. Zech. 11. 8.

And what delight, what content, what pleasure, can God take in such men? None at all; no, though they should be mingled with the best of saints of God; yea, though the best of saints should supplicate for them. *Thus, says Jeremiah, said the Lord unto me, though Moses and Samuel stood before me, that is, to pray for them, yet my mind could not be toward this people; cast them out of my sight, and let them go forth.*

Here is nought but open war, acts of hostility, and shameful rebellion, on the sinner's side; and what delight can God take in that? Wherefore, if God will bend and buckle the spirit of such an one, he must

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must shoot an arrow at him, a bearded arrow, such as may not be plucked out of the wound: an arrow that will stick fast, (Psal. 33. 1, 2.), and cause that the sinner falls down as dead at God's foot; then will the sinner deliver up his arms, and surrender up himself as one conquered, into the hand of, and beg for the Lord's pardon, and not till then, I mean not sincerely.

And now God has overcome, and his right hand and his holy arm has gotten him the victory. Now he rides in triumph with his captive at his chariot-wheel; now he glories; now the bells in heaven do ring; now the angels shout for joy, yea, are bid to do so, *Rejoice with me, for I have found my sheep* *Luke 15. 1.* *which was lost.* *10 11.*

Now also the sinner, as a token of being overcome, lies groveling at his foot, saying. *Thine arrows are* *Pf. 45. 3.* *sharp in the heart of the king's enemies, whereby the* *4. 5.* *people fall under thee.*

Now the sinner submits, now he follows his conqueror in chains, now he seeks peace, and would give all the world, were it his own, to be in the favour of God, and to have hopes by Christ of being saved.

Now this must be pleasing, this cannot but be a thing acceptable in God's sight: *A broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise.* For it is the desire of his own heart, the work of his own hands.

Thirdly, Another reason why a broken heart is to God such an excellent thing is this, a broken heart prizes Christ, and has an high esteem for him. The whole have no need of a physician, but the sick; this sick man is the broken-hearted in the text; for God makes men sick by smiting of them, by breaking of their hearts. Hence sickness and wounds are put together; for that the one is a true effect of the other, Mark 2. 17.; Micah 6. 13.; Hof. 5. 13.

Can any think that God should be pleased, when men despise his son, saying, he hath no form nor comeliness, and when we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him? And yet so say they of him

him whose hearts God has not mollified; yea, the elect themselves confess, that before their hearts were broken, they set light by him also. He is, say they, *despised and rejected of men, and we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not.*

He is indeed the great deliverer; but what is a deliverer to them that never saw themselves in bondage, as was said before? Hence it is said of him that delivered the city, *No man remembered that same poor man.*

He has sorely suffered, and been bruised for the transgression of man, that they might not receive the smart, and hell, which by their sins they have procured to themselves: But what is that to them that never saw ought but beauty, and that never tasted any but sweetness in sin?

'Tis he that holdeth by his intercession the hands of God, and that causes him to forbear to cut off the drunkard, the liar, and unclean person, even when they are in the very act and work of their abomination; but their hard heart, their stupified heart, has no sense of such kindness as this, and therefore they take no notice of it. How many times has God said to this dresser of his vineyard, *Cut down the barren fig-tree*, while he yet, by his intercession, has prevailed for a reprieve for another year! But no notice is taken of this, no thanks is from them returned to him for such kindness of Christ. Wherefore such ungrateful inconsiderate wretches as these must needs be a continual eye-sore, as I may say, and great provocation to God; and yet thus men will do before their hearts are broken, Luke 13. 6, 7, 8, 9.

Christ, as I said, is called a physician; yea, he is the only soul-physician. He heals, how desperate soever the disease be: yea, and heals who he undertakes for ever. *I give unto them eternal life*, and doth all of free cost, of mere mercy and compassion.

But what is all this to one that neither sees his sickness, that sees nothing of a wound? What is the best physician alive, or all the physicians in the world,

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put all together, to him that knows no sickness, that is sensible of no disease? Physicians, as was said, may go a begging for all the healthful. Physicians are of no esteem, save only to the sick, or upon a supposition of being so now, or at any other time.

Why, this is the cause Christ is so little set by in the world. God has not made them sick by smiting of them; his sword has not given them the wound, his dart has not been struck through their liver; they have not been broken with his hammer, nor melted with his fire. So they have no regard to his physician; so they slight all the provision which God has made for the salvation of the soul.

But now, let such a soul be wounded; let such a man's heart be broken; let such a man be made sick through the sting of guilt, and be made to wallow himself in ashes under the burden of his transgressions; and then who but Christ, (as has been shewed afore), then the physician; then wash me Lord, supple my wounds, then pour thy wine and oil into my sore; then Lord Jesus cause me to hear the voice of joy and gladness, that the bones which thou hast broken may rejoice. Nothing now so welcome as healing; and so nothing, no man, so desirable now as Christ. His name to such is the best of names; his love to such is the best of love; himself being now not only in himself, but also to such a soul, the chiefest of ten thousands; Song 5.

As bread to the hungry, as water to the thirsty, as light to the blind, and liberty to the imprisoned; so, and a thousand times more, is Jesus Christ to the wounded, and to them that are broken-hearted.

Now, as was said, this must be excellent in God's eyes, since Christ Jesus is so glorious in his eyes. To condemn what a man counts excellent, is an offence to him; but to value, esteem, or think highly of that which is of esteem with me, this is pleasing to me, such an opinion is excellent in my sight.

What says Christ? *My Father loveth you, because ye loved me.* Who hath an high esteem for Christ, the Father hath an high esteem for them. Hence it is,

John 1. 6

is said, *He that hath the Son, hath the Father: the Father will be his, and will do for him as a father, who receiveth and sets an honourable esteem on his Son.*

But none will, none can do this, but the broken-hearted; because they, and they only, are sensible of the want and worth of an interest in him.

I dare appeal to all the world as to the truth of this; and do say again, That these, and none but these, have hearts of esteem in the sight of God.

Prov. 10. 20. Alas! the heart of the wicked is little worth, for it is destitute of a precious esteem of Christ, and cannot but be destitute, because it is not wounded, broken, and made sensible of the want of mercy by him.

Fourthly, A broken heart is of great esteem with God, because it is a thankful heart for that sense of sin and of grace it has received.

The broken heart is a sensible heart. This we touched upon before. It is sensible of the dangers which sin leadeth to; yea, and has cause to be sensible thereof, because it has seen and felt what sin is, both in the guilt and punishment that by law is due thereto. As a broken heart is sensible of sin, in the evil nature and consequences of it; so it is also sensible of the way of God's delivering the soul from the day of judgement; consequently it must be a thankful heart. Now he that praises me, glorifies me, saith God; and God loves to be glorified. God's glory is dear unto him; he will not part with that; *Psal. 50. 23.; Isa. 42. 8.*

Pf. 103. 1, 2 The broken-hearted, say I, forasmuch as he is the sensible soul, it follows that he is the thankful soul. *Bless the Lord, O my soul, said David, and all that is within me blebs his holy name.* Behold what blessing of God is here! and yet not content herewith, he goes on with it again, saying, *Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits.* But what is the matter? Oh! *he has forgiven all thine iniquities, and healed all thy diseases. He has redeemed thy life from destruction, and crowneth thee with loving kindness and tender mercies.* But how came he to be affected

sected with this? Why, he knew what it was to hang over the mouth of hell for sin; yea, he knew what it was for death and hell to beset and compass him about; yea, they took hold of him, as we have said, and were pulling of him down into the deep; this he saw to the breaking of his heart. He saw also the way of life, and had his soul relieved with faith and sense of that, and that made him a thankful man. If a man who has had a broken leg, is but made to understand, that by the breaking of that he was kept from breaking of his neck, he will be thankful to God for a broken leg. *It is good for me*, said David, *that I have been afflicted*. I was by that preserved from a great danger; for before that I went astray; Psal. 119. 67, 71.

And who can be thankful for a mercy that is not sensible that they want it, have it, and have it of mercy? Now this the broken-hearted, this the man that is of a contrite spirit, is sensible of; and that with reference to mercies of the best sort, and therefore must needs be a thankful man, and so have an heart of esteem with God, because it is a thankful heart.

Fifthly, A broken heart is of great esteem with, or an excellent thing in the sight of God, because it is an heart that desires now to become a receptacle or habitation for the spirit and graces of the Spirit of God. It was the devil's hold before, and was contented so to be. But now it is for entertaining of, for being possessed with the holy Spirit of God. *Create in me a clean heart*, said David, *and renew a right spirit within me*. *Take not thy holy Spirit from me, uphold me with thy free Spirit*. Ps 51 10, 11, 12.

Now he was for a clean heart and a right spirit; now he was for the sanctifying of the blessed spirit of grace: a thing which the uncircumcised in heart resist, and do despite unto; Acts 7. 51; Heb. 10. 29.

A broken heart, therefore, suiteth with the heart of God; a contrite spirit is one spirit with him. God, as I told you before, covets to dwell with the broken in heart, and the broken in heart desire communion

with him. Now here is an agreement, an oneness of mind; now the same mind is in thee which was also in Christ Jesus. This must needs be an excellent spirit; this must needs be better with God, and in his sight, than thousands of rams, or ten thousand rivers of oil.

But does the carnal world covet this, this spirit and the blessed graces of it? No, they despise it, as I said before; they mock at it, they prefer and countenance any sorry dirty lust rather; and the reason is, because they want a broken heart, that heart so highly in esteem with God, and remain for want thereof in their enmity to God.

The broken-hearted know, that the sanctifyings of the Spirit is a good means to keep from that relapse, out of which a man cannot come unless his heart be wounded a second time. Doubtless David had a broken heart at first conversion, and if that brokenness had remained, that is, had he not given way to hardness of heart again, he had never fallen into that sin out of which he could not be recovered, but by the breaking of his bones a second time. Therefore, I say, a broken heart is of great esteem with God; for it (and I will add, so long as it retains its tenderness) covets none but God, and the things of his holy Spirit; sin is an abomination to it.

And here, as in a fit place, before I go any further, I will shew you some of the advantages that a Christian gets by keeping of his heart tender. For

As to have a broken heart, is to have an excellent thing, so to keep this broken heart tender, is also very advantageous.

1. This is the way to maintain in thy soul always a fear of sinning against God. Christians do not wink at, or give way to sin, until their hearts begin to lose their tenderness. A tender heart will be afflicted at the sin of another, much more it will be afraid of committing sin itself; 2 Kings 22. 19.

2. A tender heart quickly yieldeth to prayer, yearneth to it, puts an edge and fire into it. We never are backward to prayer until our heart has lost

its tenderness, though then it grows cold, flat, and formal, and so carnal to and in that holy duty.

3. A tender heart has always repentance at hand for the least fault or slip or sinful thought that the soul is guilty of. In many things the best offend; but if a Christian loseth his tenderness, if he says he has his repentance to seek, his heart is grown hard, has lost that spirit, that kind spirit of repentance, it was wont to have. Thus it was with the Corinthians; they were decayed, and lost their tenderness; wherefore their sin, yea great sins, *remain unrepent-* 2 Cor. 12, ed of. 20.

4. A tender heart is for receiving often its communion with God, when he that is hardened, though the seed of grace is in him, will be content to eat, drink, sleep, wake, and go days without number without him; Isa. 17. 10, 18.; Jer. 2. 32.

5. A tender heart is a wakeful watchful heart. It watches against sin in the soul, sin in the family, sin in the calling, sin in spiritual duties and performances, &c. It watches against Satan, against the world, against the flesh, &c.

But now when the heart is not tender, there is sleepiness, unwatchfulness, idleness, a suffering the heart, the family and calling to be much defiled, spotted, and blemished with sin; for a hard heart departs from God, and turns aside in all these things.

6. A tender heart will deny itself, and that in lawful things, and will forbear even that which may be done, for some Jew, or Gentile, or the church of God, or any member of it, should be offended, or made weak thereby: whereas the Christian that is not tender, that has lost his tenderness, is so far off of denying himself in lawful things, that he will even adventure to meddle in things utterly forbidden, whoever is offended, grieved, or made weak thereby: For an instance of this, we need go no further than to the man in the text, who, while he was tender, trembled at little things; but when his heart was hardened, he could take Bathsheba to satisfy his lust, and kill her husband to cover his wickedness.

The Acceptable Sacrifice; or,

7. A tender heart, I mean the heart kept tender, preserves from many a blow, lash, and fatherly chastisement; because it shuns the causes, which is sin, of the scourging hand of God. *With the upright thou wilt shew thyself upright, but with the froward thou wilt shew thyself unfavoury,* 2 Sam. 22. 27.; Psal. 18. 25, 26, 27.

Many a needless rebuke and wound doth happen to the saints of God through their unwise behaviour: when I say needless, I mean they are not necessary, but to reclaim us from our vanities: for we should not feel the smart of them, were it not for our follies. Hence the afflicted is called a fool, because his folly brings his affliction upon him. *Fools, says David, because of their transgressions, and because of their iniquities, are afflicted.* And therefore it is, as was said before, that he calls his sin his foolishness. And again, *Ps 58. 5. God will speak peace to his people, and his saints; but & 8. 58. let not them return again to folly.*

If his children transgress my laws, I will visit their transgressions with a rod, and their iniquities with stripes.

Quest. But what should a Christian do, when God has broke his heart, to keep it tender?

Ans. To this I will speak briefly. And,

First, Give you several cautions.

Secondly, Several directions.

For cautions:

1. Take heed, that you choke not those convictions that at present do break your hearts, by labouring to put those things out of your minds which were the cause of such convictions, but rather nourish and cherish those things in a deep and sober remembrance of them. Think therefore with thyself thus, What was it that at first did wound my heart? And let that still be there, until, by the grace of God, and the redeeming blood of Christ, it is removed.

2. Shun vain company: The keeping of vain company has stifled many a conviction, killed many a desire, and made many a soul fall into hell, that once was hot in looking after heaven. A companion that

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is not profitable to the soul, is hurtful. *He that walk-eth with wise men shall be wise, but a companion of fools shall be destroyed.* Prov. 13. 10.

3. Take heed of idle talk, that thou neither hear nor join with it. *Go from the presence of a foolish man when thou perceivest not in him the lips of knowledge.* Prov. 14. 7. *Evil communications corrupt good manners: And a fool's lips are a snare to his soul.* Wherefore take heed of these things; Prov. 18. 7. 1 Cor. 15. 33.

4. Beware of the least motion to sin, that it be not countenanced, lest the countenancing of that makes way for a biggar. David's eye took his heart, and so his heart nourishing the thought, made way for the woman's company, the act of adultery, and bloody murder. *Take heed therefore, brethren, lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin.* Heb. 3. 12, 13.

And remember, that he that will rend the block, puts the thin end of the wedge first thereto, and so by driving does his work.

5. Take heed of evil examples among the godly; learn of no man to do that which the word of God forbids. Sometimes Satan makes use of a good man's bad ways, to spoil and harden the heart of them that come after. Peter's false doing had like to have spoiled Barnabas, yea, and several others more. Wherefore take heed of men, of good mens ways, and measure both theirs and thine own by no other rule but the holy word of God; Gal. 2. 11, 12, 13.

6. Take heed of unbelief, or atheistical thoughts; make no question of the truth and reality of heavenly things: for know unbelief is the worst of evils; nor can the heart be tender that nourisheth or gives place unto it. *Take heed therefore lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God.* Heb. 3. 12.

These cautions are necessary to be observed with all diligence, of all them that would, when their heart is made tender, keep it so.

And now to come to the directions:

1. Labour after a deep knowledge of God to keep it warm upon thy heart; knowledge of his presence, that

that is every where. *Do not I fill heaven and earth, saith the Lord.*

2. Knowledge of his piercing eye, that it runneth to and fro through the earth, beholding in every place the evil and the good; that his eyes behold, and his eye-lids try the children of men, Prov. 15. 3.

3. The knowledge of his power, that he is able to turn and dissolve heaven and earth into dust and ashes; and that they are in his hand but as a scroll or vesture, Heb. 1. 11, 12.

4. The knowledge of his justice, that the rebukes of it are as devouring fire, Heb. 12. 19.

5. The knowledge of his faithfulness, in fulfilling promises to them to whom they are made, and of his threatenings on the impenitent, Matth. 5. 18, chap. 24. 35.; Mark 13. 31.

Secondly, Labour to get and keep a deep sense of sin in its evil nature, and in its soul-destroying effects upon thy heart; be persuaded, that it is the only enemy of God, and that none hate, or are hated of God, but through that.

1. Remember it turned angels into devils, thrust them down from heaven to hell.

2. That it is the chain in which they are held and bound over to judgement, 2 Pet. 2.; Jude 6.

3. That it was for that that Adam was turned out of Paradise; that for which the old world was drowned; that for which Sodom and Gomorrah was burned with fire from heaven; and that which cost Christ his blood to redeem thee from the curse it has brought upon thee; and that, if any thing, will keep thee out of heaven for ever and ever.

4. Consider the pains of hell. Christ makes use of that as an argument to keep the heart tender; yea, to that end repeats and repeats both the nature and durableness of the burning flame thereof, and of the gnawing of the never-dying worm that dwells there, Mark 9. 43,—48.

Thirdly, Consider of death, both as to the certainty of thy dying, and uncertainty of the time when. We must die, we must needs die; our days are

are determined, the number of our months are with God, though not with us; nor can we pass them, would we, had we them, give a thousand worlds to do it, 2 Sam. 14. 14.; Job 7. 1. chap. 14. 1,—5.

Consider thou must die but once, I mean but once as to this world; for if thou, when thou goest hence, dost not die well, thou canst not come back again and die better. *It is appointed unto all men once to die, and after this the judgement,* Heb. 9. 27.

Fourthly, Consider also of the certainty and terribleness of the day of judgement, when Christ shall sit upon his great white throne; when the dead shall, by the sound of the trump of God, be raised up; when the elements, with heaven and earth, shall be on a burning flame; when Christ shall separate men one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats; when the books shall be opened, the witnesses produced, and every man be judged according to his works; when heaven's gate shall stand open to them that shall be saved, and the jaws of hell stand gaping for them that shall be damned, Acts 7. 30, 31.; chap. 10. 42.; Matth. 25. 30, 31.; Rev. 2. 11.; 1 Cor. 15. 51.; Rev. 20. 12.; 2 Pet. 3. 7, 10, 12.; Matth. 25. 32.; Rom. 2. 2, 15, 16.; Rev. 22. 12.; Matth. 25. 34, 41.; Rev. 20. 15.

Fifthly, Consider, Christ Jesus did use no means to harden his heart against doing and suffering those sorrows which were necessary for the redemption of thy soul. No; though he could have hardened his heart against thee, in the way of justice and righteousness, because thou hadst sinned against him, he rather awakened himself, and put on all pity, bowels, and compassion; yea, tender mercies, and did it. In his love and in his pity he saved us. His tender mercies from on high hath visited us. He loved us, and gave himself for us.

Learn then of Christ to be tender of thyself, and to endeavour to keep thy heart tender to God-ward, and to the salvation of thy soul. But, to draw to a conclusion.

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LET us now then make some use of this doctrine: At First, From the truth of the matter, namely, that the man who is truly come to God, has had his heart broken, his heart broken in order to his coming to him; and this shews us what to judge of the league that is between sin and the soul, to wit, that it is so firm, so strong, so inviolable, as that nothing can break, disannul, or make it void, unless the heart be broken for it. It was so with David, yea, his new league with it could not be broken, until his heart was broken.

It is amazing to consider, what hold sin has on some mens souls, spirits, will, and affections. It is to them better than heaven, better than God, than the soul, ay, than salvation; as is evident, because, though all these are offered them upon this condition, if they will but leave their sins; yet they will chuse rather to abide in them, to stand and fall by them. How sayst thou sinner? Is not this a truth? How many times hast thou had heaven and salvation offered to thee freely, wouldst thou but break thy league with this great enemy of God? Of God, do I say, if thou wouldst but break this league with this great enemy of thy soul? but couldst never yet be brought unto it; no, neither by threatening, nor by promise couldst thou ever yet be brought unto it.

It is said of Ahab, he sold himself to work wickedness; and in another place, *Yea, for your iniquities have you sold yourselves,* 1 Kings 21. 25.; II. 50. 1.

But what is this iniquity? Why, a thing of nought; nay, worse than nought a thousand times; but because nought is as we say nought, therefore it goes under that term, where God saith again to the people, *Ye have sold yourselves for nought,* II. 51. 3.

But, I say, what an amazing thing is this, that a rational creature should make no better a bargain; that one that is so wise in all terrene things, should be such a fool in the thing that is most weighty? And yet such a fool he is, and he tells every one that goes by

by the way, that he is such an one, because he will not break his league with sin until his heart is broken for it.

Men love darkness rather than light: Ay, they make it manifest they love it, since so great a professor will not prevail with them to leave it.

Secondly, Is this a truth, That the man that truly comes to God in order thereto, has had his heart broken? then this shews us a reason why some mens hearts are broken; even a reason why God breaks some mens hearts for sin; namely, because he would not have them die in it, but rather come to God, that they might be saved.

Behold, therefore, in this, how God resolved as to the saving of some mens souls! He will have them, he will save them, he will break their hearts, but he will save them; he will kill them, that they may live; he will wound them, that he may heal them.

And it seems by our discourse, that now there is no way left but this; fair means, as we say, will not do; good words, a glorious gospel, intreatings, beseeching with blood and tears, will not do: Men are resolved to put God to the utmost of it; if he will have them, he must fetch them, follow them, catch them, lame them; yea, break their bones, or else he shall not save them.

Some men think an invitation, an outward call, a rational discourse, will do; but they are much deceived: There must a power, an exceeding great and mighty power, attend the word, or it worketh not effectually to the salvation of the soul. I know these things are enough to leave men without excuse; but yet they are not enough to bring men home to God. Sin has hold of them, they have sold themselves to it; the power of the devil has hold of them, they are his captives at his will; yea, and more than all this, their will is one with sin, and with the devil, to be held captive thereby: And if God gives not contrition, repentance, or a broken heart, for sin, there will not be no not so much as a mind in man to forsake

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this so horrible a confederacy and plot against his soul,
2 Tim. 2. 24, 25.

Hence men are said to be drawn from these breasts, that come, or that are brought to him, Isa. 26. 9; John 6. 44.

Wherefore John might well say, *Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us!* Here is cost bestowed, pains bestowed, labour bestowed, repentance bestowed; yea, and an heart made fore, wounded, broken, and filled with pain and sorrow, in order to the salvation of the soul.

Thirdly, This then may teach us what estimation to set upon a broken heart. A broken heart is such as God esteems, yea, as God counts better than all external service: a broken heart is that which is in order to salvation, in order to thy coming to Christ for life.

The world know not what to make of it, not what to say to one that has a broken heart, and therefore to despise it, and count that man that carries it in his bosom a moping fool, a miserable wretch, an undone soul: *But a broken and a contrite spirit, O God, thou wilt not despise:* A broken heart takes thine eye, thy heart: thou chusest it for thy companion, yea, has given thy Son a charge to look well to such a man, and hast promised him thy salvation, as has afore been proved.

Sinner, hast thou obtained a broken heart? has God bestowed a contrite spirit upon thee? He has given thee what himself is pleased with; he has given thee a cabinet to hold his grace in; he has given thee an heart that can heartily desire his salvation, an heart after his own heart, that is, such as suits his mind.

True, it is painful now, sorrowful now, penitent now, grieved now; now it is broken, now it bleeds, now, now it sobs, now it sighs, now it mourns and crieth unto God. Well, very well; all this is because he has a mind to make thee laugh; he has made thee sorry on earth, that thou mightest rejoice in heaven. *Blessed are ye that mourn, for ye shall be comforted. Blessed are ye that weep now, for ye shall laugh,* Matth. 4. 5; Luke 6. 21.

But,

But, soul, be sure thou hast this broken heart: All hearts are not broken hearts; nor is every heart that seems to have a wound, an heart that is truly broken. A man may be cut to, yet not into the heart; a man may have another, yet not a broken heart, Acts 7. 54.; 1 Sam. 10. 9. We know there is a difference betwixt a wound in the flesh and a wound in the spirit; yea, a man's sin may be wounded, and yet his heart not broken; so was Pharaoh's, so was Saul's, so was Ahab's; but they had none of them the mercy of a broken heart. Therefore, I say, take heed, every scratch with a pin, every prick with a thorn, nay, every blow that God giveth with his word upon the heart of sinners, doth not therefore break them. God gave Ahab such a blow, that he made him stoop, fast, humble himself, gird himself with and lie in sackcloth, which was a great matter for a king, and go softly, and yet he never had a broken heart, 1 Kings 21. 27, 29.

What shall I say, Pharaoh and Saul confessed their sin, Judas repented himself of his doings, Esau sought the blessing, and that carefully with tears, and yet none of these had an heart rightly broken, or a spirit truly contrite; Pharaoh, Saul, and Judas, were Pharaoh, Saul, and Judas still; Esau was Esau still; there was no gracious change, no thorough turn to God, no unfeigned parting with their sins, no hearty flight for refuge, to lay hold on the hope of glory, though they indeed had thus been touched, Exod. 10. 16.; 1 Sam. 26. 21.; Matth. 27. 3.; Heb. 12. 14,—17.

The consideration of these things call aloud to us to take heed, that we take not that for a broken and a contrite spirit, that will not go for one at the day of death and judgement.

Wherefore, seeking soul, let me advise thee, that thou mayst not be deceived as to this thing of so great weight.

1. To go back towards the beginning of this book, and compare thyself with those six or seven signs of a broken and a contrite heart, which there I have,

according to the word of God, given to thee for that end; and deal with thy soul impartially about them.

2. Or, which may, and will be great help to thee if thou shalt be sincere therein; namely, to betake thyself to the search of the word, especially where thou readest of the conversion of men, and try if thy conversion be like, or has a good resemblance or oneness with theirs: But in this have a care, that thou dost not compare thyself with those good folk of whose conversion thou readest not, or of the breaking of whose heart there is no mention made in scripture; for all that are recorded in the scripture for saints have not their conversion, as to the manner or nature of it, recorded in scripture.

3. Or else, do thou consider truly of the true signs of repentance, which are laid down in scripture; for that is the true effect of a broken heart, and of a wounded spirit: And for this see, Matth. 3. 5, 6.; Luke 18. 13.; chap. 19. 8.; Acts 2. 37.—41. &c.; ch. 16. 29, 30.; ch. 19. 18, 19.; 2 Cor. 7. 8.—11.

4. Or else, take into consideration, how God has said, they shall be in their spirits that he intends to save. And for this read these scriptures:

1. That in the 31st of Jeremiah, *They shall come with weeping, and with supplication will I lead them, &c. ver. 9.*

2. Read Jer. 50. 4, 5. *In those days, and at that time, the children of Israel shall come, they and the children of Judah together, going and weeping: They shall go, and seek the Lord their God. They shall ask the way to Zion with their faces thitherward; saying, Come and let us join ourselves to the Lord, in a perpetual covenant that shall not be forgotten.*

3. Read Ezek. 6. 9. *And they that escape of you shall remember me among the nation, whither they shall be carried captives, because I am broken with their whorish heart, which have departed from me, and with their eyes which go a-whoring after their idols; and they shall loath themselves for the evils which they have committed in all their abominations.*

4. Read Ezek. 7. 16. *But they that escape of them shall*

The excellency of a Broken Heart.

shall escape, and shall be on the mountains like doves of the valleys, all of them mourning, every one for his iniquity.

5. Read Ezek. 20. 43. And there shall ye remember your ways, and all your doings, wherein ye have been defiled, and ye shall loathe yourselves in your own sight, for all your evils that ye have committed.

6. Read Ezek. 36. 31. Then shall ye remember your own evil ways, and your doings that were not good, and shall loathe yourselves in your sight, for your iniquities, and for your abominations.

7. Read Zech. 12. 10. And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem the spirit of grace and of supplications: And they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him as one that is in bitterness for his first-born.

Now all these are the fruits of the Spirit of God, and of the heart, when it is broken: Wherefore, soul, take notice of them, and because these are texts by which God promiseth, that those whom he saveth shall have this heart, this spirit, and these holy effects in them; therefore consider again, and examine thyself, whether this is the state and condition of thy soul.

And that thou mayst do it fully, consider again, and do thou,

1. Remember, that here is such a sense of sin, and of the irksomeness thereof, as maketh the man not only to abhor that, but himself, because of that. This is worth the noting by thee.

2. Remember again, that here is not only a self-abhorrence, but a sorrowful mourning unto God, at the consideration that the soul by sin has affronted, contemned, disregarded, and set at nought, both God and his holy word.

3. Remember also, that here are prayers and tears for mercy, with desires to be now out of love with sin for ever, and to be in heart and soul firmly joined and knit unto God.

4. Remem-

4. Remember also, that this people here spoken of have all the way from Satan to God, from sin to grace from death to life, scattered with tears and prayers, with weeping and supplication : They shall go weeping, and seeking the Lord their God.

5. Remember that these people, as strangers and pilgrims do, are not ashamed to ask the way of those they meet with, to Zion, or the heavenly country; whereby they confess their ignorance, as became them and their desire to know the way to life : yea, thereby they declare, that there is nothing in this world, under the sun, or this side heaven, that can satisfy the longings, the desires and cravings, of a broken and a contrite spirit.

Reader, be advised, and consider of these things seriously, and compare thy soul with them, and with what else thou shalt find here written for thy conviction and instruction.

Fourthly, If a broken heart, and a contrite spirit, be of such esteem with God then this should encourage them that have it to come to God with it. I know the great encouragement for men to come to God is, for that there is a mediator between God and man; the man Christ Jesus, 1 Tim. 2. 5. This, I say, is the great encouragement, and in its place there is none but that; but there are other engagements subordinate to that, and a broken and a contrite spirit is one of them : This is evident from several places of scripture.

Wherefore thou that canst carry a broken heart and a sorrowful spirit with thee, when thou goest to God, tell him, thy heart is wounded within thee; that thou hast sorrow in thy heart, and art sorry for thy sins; but take heed of lying. Confess also thy sins unto him, and tell him, they are continually before thee. David made an argument of these things when he went to God by prayer; O Lord, saith he, rebuke me not in thine anger: neither chasten me in thy sore displeasure. But why so? O! says he, Thine arrows stick fast in me, and thy hand presseth me sore. There is no soundness in my flesh, because of thine anger:

anger: neither is there any rest in my bones because of my sin, For mine iniquities are gone over mine head: as an heavy burden they are too heavy for me. My wounds stink, and are corrupt, because of my foolishness; I am troubled, I am bowed down greatly; I go mourning all the day long. For my loins are filled with a loathsome disease: and there is no soundness in my flesh. I am feeble and sore broken: I have roared by reason of the disquietness of my heart. Lord, all my desire is before thee: and my groaning is not hid from thee. My heart panteth, my strength faileth me: As for the light of mine eyes, it also is gone from me. My lovers and friends stand aloof from my sore. And so he goes on; Psal. 38. 1, 2, 3, 4, &c.

These are the words, sighs, complaints, prayers, and arguments of a broken heart to God for mercy; and so are they. Have mercy upon me, O God, according to thy loving kindness: according to the multitude of thy tender mercies blot out my transgressions. Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin. For I acknowledge my transgressions; and my sins are ever before me; Psal. 51. 1, 2, 3.

God alloweth poor creatures that can, without lying thus to plead and argue with him. I am poor and sorrowful, said the good man to him, let thy salvation set me on high; Psal. 69. 29.

Wherefore thou that hast a broken heart, take courage; God bids thee take courage; say therefore to thy soul, Why art thou cast down, O my soul? as usually the broken-hearted are: And why art thou disquieted within me? Hope thou in God. I had fainted, if I had not been of good courage; therefore be of good courage, and he shall strengthen thine heart; Psal. 42. 11.; Psal. 43. 5.; Psal. 27. 12, 13, 14.

But, alas! the broken-hearted are far off from this; they faint; they reckon themselves among the dead; they think God will remember them no more: the thoughts of the greatness of God, and his holiness, and their own sins and vilenesses, will certainly consume them. They feel guilt and anguish of soul; they go mourning all the day long; their mouth is full

full of gravel and gall, and they are made to drink draughts of wormwood and gall; so that he must be an artist indeed at believing, who can come to God under his guilt and horror, and plead in faith, that the sacrifices of God are a broken heart, such as he had; *and that a broken and a contrite spirit God will not despise.*

Fifthly, If a broken heart, if a broken and contrite spirit, is of such esteem with God, then why should some be, as they are, so afraid of a broken-heart, and so shy of a contrite spirit?

I have observed, that some men are as afraid of a broken-heart, or that they for their sins would have their hearts broken, as the dog is of the whip. O! they cannot away with such books, with such sermons, with such preachers, or with such talk, as tends to make a man sensible of, and to break his heart, and to make him contrite for his sins. Hence they heap to themselves such teachers, get such books, love such company, and delight in such discourse, as rather tends to harden than soften; to make desperate in, than sorrowful for their sins. They say to such sermons, books, and preachers, as Amaziah said to Amos, *O thou seer, go, flee thou away into the land of Judah, and there eat bread, and prophesy there, but prophesy not again any more at Beth-el, &c.*

*Amos 7
12, 13.*

But do these people know what they do? Yes, think they, for such preachers, such books, such discourses, tend to make one melancholy or mad; they make us, that we cannot take pleasure in ourselves, in our concerns, in our lives.

But, Oh fool in grain! let me speak unto thee. Is it a time to take pleasure, and to recreate thyself in any thing, before thou hast mourned and been sorry for thy sins? That mirth that is before repentance for sin, will certainly end in heaviness. Wherefore the wise man, putting both together, saith, that mourning must be first: *There is a time to weep, and a time to laugh, a time to mourn, and a time to dance*

Eccles. 3.

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What! an unconverted man, and laugh! Shouldst thou see one singing merry songs, that is riding up Holbourn

Holbourn to Tyburn, to be hanged for felony, wouldst thou not count him besides himself, if not worse? and yet thus it is with him that is for n^{ar}th, while he standeth condemned by the book of God for his trespasses. Man! man! thou hast cause to mourn; yea, thou must mourn if ever thou art saved. Wherefore my advice is, that instead of shunning, thou covet both such books, such preachers, and such discourses, as have a tendency to make a man sensible of, and to break his heart for sin; and the reason is, because thou wilt never be as thou shouldst, concerned about, nor seek the salvation of thine own soul, before thou hast a broken heart, a broken and a contrite spirit.

Wherefore, be not afraid of a broken heart; be not shy of a contrite spirit. It is one of the greatest mercies that God bestows upon a man or a woman. The heart rightly broken at the sense of, and made truly contrite for transgression, is a certain forerunner of salvation. This is evident from those six demonstrations which were laid down to prove the point in hand, at first.

And for thy awakening in this matter, let me tell thee, and thou wilt find it so, thou must have thy heart broken whether thou wilt or no. God is resolved to break all hearts for sin some time or other.

Can it be imagined, sin being what it is, and God what he is, to wit, a revenger of disobedience, but that one time or other man must smart for sin? smart, I say, either to repentance or to condemnation. He that mourns not now, while the door of mercy is open, must mourn for sin when the door of mercy is shut.

Shall men despise God, break his law, contemn his threats, abuse his grace, yea, shut their eyes when he says, See; and stop their ears when he says, Hear; and shall they so escape? No, no, because he called and they refused; he stretched out his hand, and they regarded it not; therefore shall calamity come upon them as upon one in travail, and they shall cry in their destruction, and then God will laugh

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at their destruction, and mock when their fear com-

Prov. 1. eth. Then saith he, *They shall cry.*

14, 15, 26. I have often observed, that this threatening is repeated at least seven times in the New-Testament, saying, *There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth; there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth;* as *Matth. 8. 12.; chap. 13. 42. and 50; chap. 12. 13.; chap. 24. 51.; chap. 25. 30.; Luke 13. 28.*

There, Where? In hell, and at the bar of Christ's tribunal, when he comes to judge the world, and shall have shut to the door to keep them out of glory, that have here despised the offer of his grace, and overlooked the day of his patience: *There shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth.* They shall weep and wail for this.

There are but two scriptures that I shall use more, and then I shall draw towards a conclusion. One is that in Proverbs, where Solomon is counselling of young men to beware of strange, that is of wanton, light, and insnaring women. Take heed of such, said he, *Lest thou mourn at last, that is, in hell, when thou art dead, when thy flesh and thy body are consumed, and say, How have I hated instruction, and despised reproof, and have not obeyed the voice of my teachers, nor inclined mine ears to them that instructed me!* *Prov. 5. 11, 12, 13, &c.*

The other scripture is that in Isaiah, where he *Is 65. 12,* says, *Because when I called, ye did not answer; when* *13, 14.* *I spake, ye did not hear, but did evil before mine eyes, and did chuse that wherein I delighted not. Therefore thus saith the Lord God, Behold, my servants shall eat, but ye shall be hungry: behold, my servants shall drink, but ye shall be thirsty; behold, my servants shall rejoice, but ye shall be ashamed: behold, my servants shall sing for joy of heart, but ye shall cry for sorrow of heart, and shall howl for vexation of spirit.*

How many beholds are here? and every behold is not only a call to careless ones to consider, but as a declaration from heaven, that thus at last it shall be with all impenitent sinners; that is, when others sing for joy in the kingdom of heaven, they, they shall sorrow in hell, and howl for vexation of spirit there.

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Wherefore, let me advise, that you be not afraid of, but that ye rather covet a broken heart, and prize a contrite spirit; I say, covet it now, now the white flag is hung out, now the golden sceptre of grace is held forth to you. Better mourn now God inclines to mercy and pardon, than mourn when the door is quite shut up. And take notice, that this is not the first time that I have given you this advice.

Lastly, If a broken-heart be a thing of so great esteem with God, as has been said, and if duties cannot be rightly performed by a heart that has not been broken; then this shews the vanity of those peoples minds, and also the invalidity of their pretended divine services, who worship God with an heart that was never broken, and without a contrite spirit. There has indeed at all times been great flocks of such professors in the world in every age; but to little purpose, unless to deceive themselves, to mock God, and lay stumbling-blocks in the way of others; for a man whose heart was never truly broken, and whose spirit was never contrite, cannot profess Christ in earnest; cannot love his own soul in earnest; I mean, he cannot do these things in truth, and seek his own good the right way, for he wants a bottom for it, to wit, a broken heart for sin, and a contrite spirit.

That which makes a man an hearty, an unfeigned, a sincere seeker after the good of his own soul, is sense of sin, and a godly fear of being overtaken with the danger which it brings a man into. This makes him contrite or repentant, and puts him upon seeking of Christ the Saviour, with heart-aking and heart-breaking considerations.

But this cannot be, where this sense, this godly fear, and this holy contrition is wanting. Profess men may, and make a noise, as the empty barrel maketh the biggest sound; but prove them, and they are full of air, full of emptiness, and that is all.

Nor are such professors tender of God's name, nor of the credit of that gospel which they profess; nor can they, for they want that which should oblige

them thereunto, which is a sense of pardon and forgiveness, by the which their broken hearts have been replenished, succoured, and made to hope in God. Paul, said, *The love of Christ constrained him.* - But what was Paul, but a broken-hearted and a contrite sinner? See Acts 9. 3.—6.; 2 Cor. 5. 14.

When God shews a man the sin he has committed the hell he has deserved, the heaven he has lost ; and yet that Christ, and grace, and pardon may be had ; this will make him serious, this will make him melt, this will break his heart, this will shew him that there is more than air, than a noise, than an empty sound in religion ; and this is the man, whose heart, whose life, whose conversation and all, will be engaged in the matters of the eternal salvation of his precious and immortal soul.

Object. But some may object, That in this saying I seem too rigid and censorious ; and will, if I moderate not these lines with something milder afterward, discourage many an honest soul.

I Answer, Not a jot, not an honest soul in all the world will be offended at my words ; for not one can be an honest soul, I mean with reference to its concerns in another world, that has not had a broken heart, and never had a contrite spirit. This I will say, because I would be understood aright, that all attain not to the same degree of trouble, nor lie so long there under, as some of their brethren do : But to go to heaven without a broken heart, or to be forgiven sin without a contrite spirit, is no article of my belief. We speak not now of what is secret ; revealed things belong to us and our children ; nor must we venture to go further in our faith. Doth not Christ say, *The whole have no need of a physician ;* that is, they see no need, but Christ will make them see their need before he ministers his sovereign grace unto them ; and good reason, otherwise he will have but little thanks for his kindness.

Object. But there are those that are godly educated from their childhood, and so drink in the principles of Christianity they know not how.

Ans. I count it one thing to receive the faith of Christ from men only, and another to receive it from God by the means. If thou art taught by an angel, yet if not taught of God, thou wilt never come to Christ; I do not say thou wilt never profess him. But if God speaks, and thou shalt hear and understand him, that voice will make such work within thee as was never made before. The voice of God is a voice by itself, and is so distinguished by them that are taught thereby; John 6. 44. 45.; Psal. 29.; Hab. 3. 15, 16.; Ephes. 4. 20, 21.; 1 Pet. 2. 2, 3.

Object. But some men are not so debauched and profane as some, and so need not to be so hammered and fired as others; so broken and wounded as others.

Ans. God knows best what we need. Paul was as righteous before conversion as any that can pretend to civility now, I suppose; and yet that notwithstanding he was made to shake, and was astonished at himself at his conversion. And truly I think the more righteous any is in his own eyes before conversion, the more need he has of heart-breaking work, in order to his salvation; because a man is not by nature so easily convinced that his righteousness is to God abominable, as he is that his debauchery and profaneness is.

A man's goodness is that which blinds him most, is dearest to him, and hardly parted with; and therefore when such an one is converted, that thinks he has goodness of his own enough to commend him in whole or in part to God, (though but few such are converted), there is required a great deal of breaking work upon his heart, to make him come to Paul's conclusion, *What! are we better than they? No, in no wise*, Rom. 3. 9. I say, before he can be brought to see his glorious robes are filthy rags, and his gainful things but loss and dung, Isa. 64.; Phil. 3.

This is also gathered from these words, *Publicans and harlots enter into the kingdom of God before the Pharisees*. Matth. 21. 31.

Why before them? But because they lie fairer for the word, are easier convinced of their need of Christ, and

Ans.

and so are brought home to him without (as I may say) all that ado, that the Holy Ghost doth make to bring home one of these to him.

True; nothing is hard or difficult to God: But I speak after the manner of men. And let who will take to task a man debauched in this life, and one that is not so, and he shall see, if he laboureth to convince them both that they are in a state of condemnation by nature, that the Pharisee will make his appeals to God, with a great many, God, I thank thee's; while the publican hangs his head, shakes at heart, and smites upon his breast, saying, *God be merciful to me a sinner*, Luke 18. 11, 12, 13

Wherefore a self-righteous man is but a painted Satan, or a devil in fine cloaths: but thinks he so of himself? No! no! He saith to others, Stand back, come not near me, I am holier than thou. 'Tis almost impossible, that a self-righteous man should be saved. But he that can drive a camel through the eye of a needle, can cause, that even such a one should see his lost condition, and that he needeth the righteousness of God, which is by faith of Jesus Christ. He can make him see, I say, that his own goodness did stand more in his way to the kingdom of heaven than he was aware of; and can make him feel too, that his leaning to that is as great iniquity as any immorality that men commit. The sum then is, that men that are converted to God by Christ, through the word and spirit, (for all this must go to effectual conversion), must have their hearts broken, and spirits made contrite, I say, it must be so, for the reasons shewed before.

Yea, and all decayed, apostatized, and backslidden Christians must, in order to their recovery again to God, have their hearts broken, their souls wounded, their spirits made contrite, and sorry for their sins.

Come, come, conversion to God is not so easy, and so smooth a thing, as some would have men believe it is. Why is man's heart compared to fallow ground, God's word to a plough, and his ministers to plowmen? if the heart indeed has no need of breaking,

in order to the receiving of the seed of God unto eternal life, Jer. 4. 3.; Luke 9. 62.; 1 Cor. 9. 10.

Who knows not, that the fallow ground must be plowed, and plowed too, before the husbandman will venture his seed; yea, and after that oft soundly harrowed, or else he will have but a slender harvest?

Why is the conversion of the soul compared to the grafting of a tree, if that be done without cutting?

The word is the graft, the soul is the tree, and the word, as the cion must be let in by a wound; for to stick on the outside, or to be tied on with a string will do no good here. Heart must be set to heart, and back to back, or your pretended ingrafting will come to nothing, Rom. 11. 17, 24.; Jam. 1. 20.

I say, heart must be set to heart, and back to back, or the sap will not be conveyed from the root to the branch; and I say, this must be done by a wound. The Lord opened the heart of Lydia, as a man openeth the stock to graft in the cions, and so the word was let into her soul, and so the word and her heart cemented, and became one, Acts 16. 14.

Why is Christ bid to gird his sword upon his thigh? and why must he make his arrows sharp, and all, that the heart may with this sword and these arrows be shot, wounded, and made to bleed? Yea, why is he commanded to let it be so, if the people would bow and fall kindly under him, and heartily implore his grace without it? Psal. 45.; chap. 55. 3. chap. 4. 4. Alas! men are too lofty, too proud, too wild, too devilishly resolved in the ways of their own destruction; in their occasions, they are like the wild asses upon the wild mountains; nothing can break them of their purposes, or hinder them from ruining of their own precious and immortal souls, but the breaking of their hearts.

Why is a broken heart put in the room of all sacrifices which we can offer to God, and a contrite spirit put in the room of all offerings, as they are, (and you may see it so, if you compare the text with that ver. which goes before it), I say, why is it counted better than all, were they all put together, if any one part
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or if all external parts of worship, were they put together, could be able to render the man a sound and a right-made new creature without it? *A broken heart, a contrite spirit, God will not despise*; but both thou, and all thy service, he will certainly slight and reject, if, when thou comest to him, a broken heart be wanting; wherefore here is the point, Come broken, come contrite, come sensible of, and sorry for thy sins, or thy coming will be counted no coming to God aright; and if so, consequently thou wilt get no benefit thereby.

Sighs

Sighs from Hell; or, The groans of
a damned soul.

Discovering from Luke iv. the lamentable estate
of the damned :

And may fitly serve as a warning-word to sinners,
both old and young, by faith in Jesus Christ,
to avoid the same place of torment.

With a discovery of the usefulness of the Scrip-
tures, as our safe-conduct for avoiding the
torments of hell.

The AUTHOR to the READER.

FRIEND, Because it is a dangerous thing to be walk-
ing towards the place of darkness and anguish;
and again, because it is (notwithstanding) the journey
that most of the poor souls in the world are taking,
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and that with delight and gladness, as if there was the only happiness to be found; I have therefore thought it my duty, (being made sensible of the danger that will befall those that fall therein), for the preventing of thee, (O thou poor man or woman!), to tell thee, by opening this parable, what sad success those souls have had, and are like to have, that have been, or shall be found, persevering therein.

We use to count him a friend that will forewarn his neighbour of the danger when he knoweth thereof, and doth also see that the way his neighbour is walking in doth lead right thereto, especially when we think that our neighbour may be either ignorant or careless of his way. Why, friend, it may be, nay twenty to one but thou hast been ever since thou didst come into the world, with thy back towards heaven, and thy face towards hell; and thou, either through ignorance or carelessness, (which is as bad, if not worse), hast been running full hastily that way ever since. Why, I beseech thee put a little stop to thy earnest race, and take a view of what entertainment thou art like to have, if thou do in deed and in truth persist in this thy course. Thy way leads down to death, and thy steps take hold on hell, Prov. 5. 5. It may be the path indeed is pleasant to the flesh, but the end thereof will be bitter to thy soul. Hark! dost thou not hear the bitter cries of them that are but newly gone before? Saying, *Let him dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue, that is so tormented in this flame*, Luke 16. Dost thou not hear them say, Send out from the dead, to prevent my father, my brother, and my father's house, from coming into this place of torment? Shall not then these mournful groans pierce thy flinty heart? Wilt thou stop thine ears, and shut thy eyes? And wilt thou not regard? Take warning and stop thy journey before it be too late. Wilt thou be like the silly fly, that is not quiet unless she be either intangled in the spider's web, or burned in the candle? Wilt thou be like the bird that hasteth to the snare of the fowler?

Wilt

Wilt thou be like that simple one named in the 7th of Proverbs, that will be drawn to the slaughter by the cord of a silly lust? O, sinner, sinner, there are better things than hell to be had, and at a cheaper rate by the thousandth part! O (there is no comparison) there is heaven, there is God, there is Christ, there is communion with an innumerable company of saints and angels. Hear the message then that God doth send, that Christ doth send, that saints do bring, nay, that the dead do send unto thee: *I pray thee therefore that thou wouldst send him to my father's house; if one went to them from the dead they would repent. How long ye simple ones will you love simplicity? And ye scorers delight in scorning? And ye fools hate knowledge? Turn ye at my reproof, and behold, saith God, I will pour out my Spirit upon you; I will make known my words unto you. I say, hear this voice, O silly one, and turn and live thou sinful soul, lest he make thee hear that other saying, But, because I have called, and you have refused, I have stretched out my hand, and no man regarded; I also will laugh at your calamity, and mock when your fear cometh.*

O poor soul, if God and Christ did wish thee for thine harm, it would be another matter; then if thou didst refuse, thou mightest have some excuse to make, or fault to find, and ground to make delays. But this is for thy profit, for thy advantage, for the pardoning of thy sins, the salvation of thy soul, the delivering thee from hell-fire, from the wrath to come, from everlasting burnings, into favour with God, Christ, and communion with all happiness, (that is so indeed).

But it may be thou wilt say, All that hath been spoken to in this discourse is but a parable, and parables are no realities.

I could put thee off with this answer, That though it be a parable, yet it is a truth, and not a lie; and thou shalt find it so too, to thy cost, if thou shalt be found a sligher of God, Christ, and the salvation of thy own soul.

But, secondly, know for certain, that the things signified by parables are wonderful realities. O what a glorious reality was there signified by that parable, *The kingdom of heaven is like to a net that is cast into the sea!* &c. signifying, that sinners of all sorts, of all nations, should be brought into God's kingdom by the net of the gospel. And, O! how real a thing shall the other part thereof be, when it is fulfilled, which saith, *And when it was full they drew it to the shore, and put the good into vessels, but threw the bad away,* Matth. 13. 47, 48. signifying the mansions of glory that the saints should have, and also the rejection that God will give to the ungodly, and to sinners. And also that parable, what a glorious reality is there in it? which saith, *Except a corn of wheat fall to the ground and die, it abideth alone; but if it die, it doth bring forth much fruit,* John 12. 24. To signify, that unless Jesus Christ did indeed spill his blood, and die the cursed death, he should abide alone; that is, have never a soul into glory with him; but if he died, he should bring forth much fruit; that is, save many sinners. And also how real a truth there was in that parable, concerning the Jews putting Christ to death, which the poor dispersed Jews can best experience to their cost! for they have been almost ever since a banished people, and such as have had God's sore displeasure wonderfully manifested against them, according to the truth of the parable, Matth. 21. 33,—41. O therefore, for Jesus Christ's sake, do not slight the truth, because it is discovered in a parable? For by this argument thou mayst also, nay, thou wilt also slight almost all the things that our Lord Jesus Christ did speak; for he spake to them for the most part (if not all) in parables. Why should it be said of thee, as it is said of some? *These things are spoken to them that are without, in parables, that seeing they might not see, and that hearing they might not understand,* Luke 8. 10.; I say, take heed of being a quarreller against Christ's parables, lest Christ also object against the salvation of thy soul at the judgement-day.

Friend

Friend, I have no more to say to thee now. If thou dost love me, pray for me, that my God would not forsake me, nor take his Holy Spirit from me; and that God would fit me to do and suffer what shall be from the world or devil inflicted upon me. I must tell thee, the world rages, they stamp and shake their heads, and fain they would be doing; the Lord help me to take all they shall do with patience; and when they smite the one cheek, to turn the other to them, that I may do as Christ hath bidden me; for then the Spirit of God, and of glory, shall rest upon me. Farewel.

I am thine, to serve in the Lord Jesus,

JOHN BUNYAN.

Sighs

Friend

Sighs from Hell; or, The groans of a damned soul.

LUKE xvi. 19,—31.

Ver. 19. *There was a certain rich man, which was clothed in purple and fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day.*

THIS scripture was not spoken by our Lord Jesus Christ, to shew you the state of two single persons only, (as some through ignorance of the drift of Christ in his parables do dream), but to shew you the state of the godly and ungodly to the world's end; as is clear to him that is of an understanding heart. For he spake them, to the end that after generations should take notice thereof, and fear, lest they also fall into the same condition.

Now in my discourse upon these words, I shall not be tedious; but as briefly as I may, I shall pass through the several verses, and lay you down some of the several truths contained therein: and the Lord grant that they may be profitable, and of great advantage to those that read them or hear them read.

The 19th and 20th verses also, I shall not spend much time upon, only give you three or four short hints, and so pass to the next verses; for they are the words I do intend most especially to insist upon.

The 19th 20th and 21st verses run thus: *There was a certain rich man which was clothed in purple and fine linen, and fared (deliciously or) sumptuously every day. And there was a certain beggar named Lazarus, which was laid at his gate full of sores, &c.*

1. If these verses had been spoken by Jesus Christ, and no more, all the world would have gone near to have cast a wrong interpretation upon them; I say, if Jesus had said only this much, *There was a certain rich man which fared sumptuously daily, and a certain beggar laid at his gates full of sores*, the world would have made this conclusion of them; the rich man was the happy man; for, at the first view, it doth represent such a thing: but take all together, (that is,

is), read the whole parable, and you shall find, that there is no man in a worse condition than he; as I shall clearly hold forth afterward.

2. Again, if a man would judge of men according to outward appearance, he shall oft-times take his mark amiss. Here is a man to outward appearance, appears the only blessed man, better by half than the beggar, inasmuch as he is rich, the beggar poor; he is well clothed, but peradventure the beggar is naked; he hath good food, but the beggar would be glad of dog's meat. (*And he desired to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table:*) the rich man fares well every day; but the beggar must be glad of a bit when he can get it. O! who would not be in a rich man's state? A wealthy man, fors of new suits, and dainty dishes every day; enough to make one who minds nothing but his belly, and his back, and his lusts, to say, O that I were in that man's condition! O that I had about me as that man has! Then I should live a life indeed; then should I have heart's-ease, good store; then I should live pleasantly, and might say to my soul, *Soul, be of good cheer, eat, drink, and be merry*, Luke 12. 19. thou hast every thing plenty, and art in a most blessed condition.

I say, this might be the conclusion with them that judge according to outward appearance. But if the whole parable be well considered, you will see, Luke 26. 15. that which is had in high estimation with men, is an abomination in the sight of God. And again, Job 16. 20, 21, 22. that condition that is the saddest condition according to outward appearance, is oft-times the most excellent; for the beggar had ten thousand degrees the best of it, though to outward appearance his state was the saddest; from whence we shall observe thus much:

1. That those who judge according to outward appearance, do for the most part judge amiss, John 7. 24.

2. That they that look upon their outward enjoyments to be tokens of God's special grace unto them, are also deceived, Rev. 3. 17. For as it is here in the parable,

parable, a man of wealth, and a child of the devil may make but one person; or, a man may have abundance of outward enjoyments, and yet be carried by the devils into eternal burning, Luke 12. 10. But this is the trap in which the devil hath caught many thousands of poor souls, namely by getting them to judge according to outward appearance, or according to God's outward blessings.

Do but ask a poor, carnal, covetous wretch, how he should know a man to be in a happy state; and he will answer those that God blesteth, and giveth abundance of this world unto; when, for the most part, they are they that are the cursed men. Alas, poor men! they are so ignorant as to think, that because a man is increased in outward things, and that by a small stock, therefore God doth love that man with a special love, or else he would never do so much for him, never bless him so, and prosper the work of his hands. Ah, poor soul! it is the rich man that goes to hell. And the rich man died, and in hell, mark, in hell he lift up his eyes, &c.

Methinks to see how the great ones of the world will go strutting up and down the streets sometimes, it makes me wonder. Surely they look upon themselves to be the only happy men; but it is because they judge according to outward appearance; they look upon themselves to be the only blessed men, when the Lord knows the generality are left out of that blessed condition. *Not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble are called.* 1 Cor. 1. 26. Ah! did they that do now so brag that no body dare scarce look on them, but believe this, it would make them hang down their heads and cry, O give me a Lazarus's portion!

I might here enlarge very much, but I shall not only thus much I shall say to you that have much of this world, have a care that you have not your portion in this world: Take heed that it be not said to you hereafter, when you would very willingly have heaven, Remember in your lifetime you had your good things; in your lifetime you had your portion. Psal. 17. 14.

And, friend, thou that seekest after this world, and desirest riches, let me ask this question: Wouldst thou be content that God should put thee off with a portion in this life? Wouldst thou be glad to be kept out of heaven with a back well clothed, and a belly well filled with the dainties of this world? Wouldst thou be glad to have all thy good things in thy lifetime, to have thy heaven to last no longer than while thou dost live in this world? Wouldst thou be willing to be deprived of eternal happiness and felicity? If thou say no, then have a care of the world and thy sins; have a care of desiring to be a rich man, *lest thy table be made a snare unto thee*, Psal. 69. 22. lest the wealth of this world do bar thee out of glory. For, as the apostle saith, *They that will be rich, do fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in perdition and destruction*, 1 Tim. 6. 9. Thus much in general: but now, particularly,

These two men here spoken of, (as I said), do hold forth to us the state of the godly and ungodly; the beggar holdeth forth the godly, and the rich man the ungodly. *There was a certain rich man*, &c.

But why are the ungodly held forth under the notion of a rich man?

1. Because Christ would not have them look too high, as I said before, but that those who have riches would have a care that they be not all their portion, Jam. 1. 10, 11, 12.; 1 Tim. 6. 17.

2. Because rich men are most liable to the devil's temptations, are most ready to be puffed up with pride, stoutness, cares of this world, in which things they spend most of their time in lusts, drunkenness, wantonness, idleness, together with other works of the flesh; *For which things sake, the wrath of God cometh upon the children of disobedience*, Col. 3. 6.

3. Because he would comfort the hearts of his own which are most commonly of the poorer sort: but God hath chosen the poor, despised, and base things of this world, 1 Cor. 1. 22. Should God have set the rich man in the blessed state, his children would have

concluded, being poor, that they had no share in the life to come.

And again, had not God given such a discovery of the sad condition of those that are for the most part rich men, we should have had men conclude absolutely, that the rich are the blessed men. Nay, albeit the Lord himself doth so evidently declare, that the rich ones of the world are for the most part in the saddest condition, yet they, through unbelief, or else presumption, do harden themselves, and seek for the glory of this world, as though the Lord Jesus Christ did not mean as he said, or else that he will say more than shall assuredly come to pass; but let them know that the Lord hath a time to fulfil what he had a time to declare, for the scripture cannot be broken, John 10. 35.

But again, the Lord by his word doth not mean those are ungodly who are rich in the world, and no other; for then must all those that are poor, yet graceless and vain men, be saved, and delivered from eternal vengeance, which would be contrary to the word of God; which saith, that together with the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, there are bondmen or servants, and slaves, that cry out at the appearance of the Almighty God, and his Son Jesus Christ to judgement, Rev. 6. 15.

So that though Christ doth say, *There was a certain rich man*, yet you must understand, he meaneth all the ungodly, rich or poor. Nay, if you will not understand it so now, you shall be made to understand it to be so meant at the day of Christ's second coming, when all that are ungodly shall stand at the left hand of Christ with pale faces, and guilty consciences, with the vials of the Almighty's wrath ready to be poured out upon them. Thus much in brief touching the 19th verse. I might have observed other things from it, but now I forbear, having other things to speak of at this time.

Ver. 20. *And there was a certain beggar named Lazarus, which was laid at his gate full of sores.*

THIS verse doth chiefly hold forth these things.

1. That the saints of God are a poor contemptible people: *There was a certain beggar.* If you understand the word *beggar*, to hold forth outward poverty, or scarcity in outward things, such are saints of the Lord, for they are for the most part a poor, despised, contemptible people. But if you allegorize it, and interpret it thus, they are such as beg earnestly for heavenly food; this is also the spirit of the children of God, and it may be, and is a truth in this sense; though not so naturally gathered from this scripture.

2. *That he was laid at his gate full of sores.* These words hold forth the distempers of believers, saying, *He was full of sores*; which may signify the many troubles, temptations, persecutions, and afflictions in body and spirit, which they meet withal while they are in the world; and also the entertainment they meet with at the hands of those ungodly ones who live upon the earth. Whereas it is said, *He was laid at his gate full of sores*; mark, he was laid at his gate not in his house; that was thought too good for him, but he was laid at his gate full of sores. From whence observe, That the ungodly world do not desire to entertain and receive the poor saints of God into their houses. If they must needs be some where near unto them, yet they shall not come into their houses, but shut them out of doors; if they will needs be near us, let them be at the gate. *And he was laid at the gate full of sores.* 2. Observe, that the world are not at all touched with the afflictions of God's children, for all they are full of sores; a despised, afflicted, tempted, persecuted, people, the world doth not pity; no, but rather labour to aggravate their trouble by shutting them out of doors; sink or swim, what cares the world? they are resolved to disown them; they will give them no entertainment; if the lying in the streets will do them any good, if hard usage will

will do them any good, if to be disowned, rejected, and shut out of doors by the world will do them any good, they shall have enough of that; but otherwise no refreshment, no comfort from the world. *And he was laid at his gate full of sores.*

Ver. 21. And desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table: Moreover, the dogs came, and licked his sores.

BY these words our Lord Jesus doth shew us the frame of a Christian's heart, and also the heart and carriage of worldly men towards the saints of the Lord. The Christian's heart is held forth by this, that any thing will content him while he is on this side glory. *And he desired to be fed with the crumbs; the dogs meat, any thing.* I say, a Christian will be content with any thing, if he have but to keep life and soul together, (as we use to say), he is content, he is satisfied; he hath learned (if he hath learned to be a Christian) to be content with any thing: as Paul saith, *I have learned in whatsoever state I am, therein to be content.* He learns in all conditions to study to love God, to walk with God, to give up himself to God; and if the crumbs that fall from the rich man's table will but satisfy nature, and give him bodily strength, that thereby he may be the more able to walk in the way of God, he is contented. *And he desired to be fed with the crumbs that fell from the rich man's table.* But mark, he had them not; you do not find that he had so much as a crumb, or a scrap, allowed unto him. No, then the dogs will be beguiled; that must be preserved for the dogs. From whence observe, That the ungodly world do love their dogs better than the children of God. You will say, that is strange. It is so indeed, yet it is true, as will be clearly manifested. As for instance; how many pounds do some men spend on their dogs, when in the mean while the poor saints of God may starve for hunger? They will build houses for their dogs, when the saints must be glad to wander and lodge in dens, and caves of the earth, Heb. 11. 38.

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if they be in any of their houses for the hire thereof, they will warn them out or eject them, or pull down the house over their heads, rather than not rid themselves of such tenants. Again, some men cannot go half a mile from home but they must have dogs at their heels; but they can very willingly go half a score miles without the society of a Christian. Nay, if when they are busy with their dogs, they should chance to meet a Christian, they would willingly shift him if they could. They will go on the other side the hedge or the way, rather than they will have any society with him. And if at any time a child of God should come into a house where there are but two or three ungodly wretches, they do commonly wish either themselves or the saint out of doors: And why so? Because they cannot down with the society of a Christian; though if there come in at the same time a dog, or a drunken swearing wretch, (which is worse than a dog), they will make him welcome; he shall sit down with them, and partake of their dainties. And now tell me, you that love your sins and your pleasures, had you not rather keep company with a drunkard, a swearer, a strumpet, a thief, nay, a dog, than with an honest-hearted Christian? If you say, No, what means your sour carriage to the people of God? Why do you look on them as if you would eat them up? yet at the very same time, if you can but meet your dog, or a drunken companion, you can fawn upon them, take acquaintance with them, to the tavern or alehouse with them, if it be two or three times in a week; But if the saints of God meet together, pray together, and labour to edify one another, you will stay till doomsday before you will look into the house where they are. Ah! friends, when all comes to all, you will be found to love drunkards, strumpets, dogs, any thing, nay, to serve the devil, rather than to have loving and friendly society with the saints of God.

Moreover, the dogs came, and licked his sores. Here again you may see, not only the afflicted state of saints of God in this world, but also, that even dogs themselves,

selves, according to their kind, are more favourable to the saints than the sinful world; Though the ungodly will have no mercy on the saints, yet it is ordered so, that these creatures, dogs, lions, &c. will. Though the rich man would not entertain him in his house, yet his dogs will come, and do him the best good they can, even to lick his running sores. It was thus with Daniel, when the world was mad against him, and would have him thrown to the lions to be devoured, the lions shut their mouths at him, (or rather the Lord did shut them up), so that there was not that hurt befall to him, as was desired by the adversaries, Dan. 6. And this I am persuaded of, that would the creatures do as some men would have them, the saints of God should not walk so quietly up and down the streets, and other places, as they do. And as I said before, so I say again, I am persuaded, that at the day of judgement many mens conditions and carriages will be so laid open, that it will evidently appear they have been very merciless, and mad against the children of God; insomuch that when the providence of God did fall out so as to cross their expectation, they have been very much offended thereat, as is very evidently seen in them who set themselves to study (Psal. 31. 13.) how to bring the saints into bondage, and to thrust them into corners, as in these late years: And because God hath in his goodness ordered things otherwise, they have gnashed their teeth thereat. Hence then let the saints learn not to commit themselves to their enemies: Beware of men, Matth. 10. 17. They are very merciless men, and will not so much favour you (if they can help it) as you may suppose they may. Nay, unless the over-ruling hand of God in goodness do order things contrary to their natural inclination, they will not favour you so much as a dog.

Ver. 22. And it came to pass that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom: the rich man also died, and was buried.

THE former verses do briefly hold forth the carriage of the ungodly in this life, toward the saints.

saints. Now this verse doth hold forth the departure both of the godly and ungodly, out of this life.

Where he said, *And it came to pass that the beggar died, and was carried into Abraham's bosom; and the rich man died also.* This beggar died; that represents the godly: and the rich man died; that represents the ungodly. From whence observe, Neither godly nor ungodly must live always without a change, either by death or judgement. The good man died, and the bad man died. That scripture doth also back this truth, That good and bad must die, marvellous well, where it is said, *And it is appointed for men once to die, and after that the judgement,* Heb. 9. 27.

Mark, He doth not say it is so, that men by chance may die; which might beget in the hearts of the ungodly especially, some hope to escape the bitterness of it: But he saith, It is a thing most certain, it is appointed. Mark, *It is appointed for men once to die, and after that the judgement.* God hath decreed it, that since men have fallen from that happy estate that God at the first did set them in, *they shall die,* Rom. 6. 23. Now when it is said, the beggar died, and the rich man died, part of the meaning is, they ceased to be any more in this world; I say, partly the meaning is, but not altogether. Though it be altogether the meaning, when some of the creatures die, and yet it is but in part the meaning, when it is said that men, women, or children die; for there is to them something else to be said, more than a barely going out of the world: For if when unregenerate men and women die, there were an end of them, not only in this world, but also in the world to come, they would be happy over they will be now; for when ungodly men and women die, there is that to come after death that will be very terrible to them, namely, to be carried by the angels of darkness from their deathbeds to hell, there to be reserved to the judgement of the great day, when both body and soul shall meet and be united together again, and made capable to undergo the uttermost vengeance of the Almighty to all eternity. This is that, I say, which

which doth follow a man (that is not born again) after death; as is clear from that in 1 Pet. 3. 18, 19. where, before speaking of Christ being raised again by the power of his eternal Spirit, he saith, *By which, that is, by that Spirit, he went and preached to the spirits in prison.* But what is the meaning of this? Why, thus much, That those souls who were once alive in the world, in the time or days in which Noah lived, being disobedient in their times to the calls of God, by his Spirit in Noah, for so I understand it, was, according to that which was foretold by that preacher, deprived of life, and overcome by the flood, and are now in prison. Mark, he preached to the spirits in prison: He doth not say, who were in prison, under chains of darkness, reserved, or kept there in that prison, in which now they are, (ready like villains in the goal, to be brought before the judgement-seat of Christ at the great day). But of this I shall speak further by and by. Now if this one truth, that men must die and depart this world, and either enter into joy, or else into prison, to be reserved to the day of judgement, were believed, we should not have so many wanton walks up and down the streets as there do; at least it would put a mighty check to their filthy carriages, so that they would not, could not walk so basely and sinfully as they do. Belshazzar, notwithstanding he was so far from the fear of God as he was, yet when he did but see God was offended, and threatened him for his wickedness, it made him hang down his head, and knock his knees together, Dan. 5. 5, 6. If you read the verses before, you will find he was careless; and satisfying his lusts in drinking, and playing the wanton with his concubines: but so soon as he did perceive the finger of an hand-writing, then saith the scripture *the king's countenance was changed, and his thoughts troubled him; so that the joints of his loins were loosed, and his knees smote one against another.* And when Paul told Felix of righteousness, temperance, and judgement, to come, it made him tremble. And let me tell thee, (soul), whoever thou art, that if thou didst

but verily believe that thou must die, and come to judgement, it would make thee turn over a new leaf. But this is the misery, the devil doth labour by all means, as to keep out other things that are good, so to keep out of the heart, as much as in him lies, the thoughts of passing from this life into another world; for he knows, if he can but keep them from the serious thoughts of death, he shall the more easily keep them in their sins, and so from closing with Jesus Christ: as Job saith, *Their houses are safe from fear, neither is the rod of God upon them.* Which makes them say to God, *Depart from us, for we desire not the knowledge of thy ways,* ver. 14. Because there is no fear of death and judgement to come, therefore they do put off God and his ways, and spend their days in their sins, and in a moment, that is before they are aware, go down to the grave, ver. 17. And thus it fared also with the man spoken of in Luke 12. 20. The man, instead of thinking on death, he thought how he might make his barn bigger; but in the midst of his business in the world, he lost his soul before he was aware, supposing that death had been many years off: But God said unto him, *Thou fool, thou troublest thyself about things of this life; thou puttest off the thoughts of departing this world, when this night thy soul shall be taken from thee; or, this night, they, that is, devils will fetch away thy soul from thee.* And here it comes to pass, mens not being exercised with the thoughts of departing this life, that they are so unexpectedly to themselves and their neighbours, taken away from the pleasures and profits, yea, and all the enjoyments they busy themselves withal while they live in this world. And hence it is again, that you have some in your towns and cities that are so suddenly taken away, some from haunting the ale-houses, others from haunting the whore-houses, others from playing and gaming, others from the cares and covetous desires after this world, unlooked for as by themselves, or their companions. Hence it is also, that men do so wonder at such tidings as these, That
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there is such a one dead, such a one departed; it is because they do so little consider both the transitoriness of themselves and their neighbours; for had they but their thoughts well exercised about the shortness of this life, and the danger that will befall such as do miss of the Lord Jesus Christ, it would make them more wary and sober, and spend more time in the service of God, and be more delighted and diligent in inquiring after the Lord Jesus Christ, *who is the deliverer from the wrath to come*, 1 Thess. 1. 10. For, as I said before, it is evident, that they who live after the flesh in the lusts thereof do not really and seriously think on death, and the judgement that doth follow after; neither do they indeed endeavour so to do; for did they, it would make them say with holy Job, *All the days of my appointed time will I wait till my change come*, Job 14. 14. And, as I said before, that not only the wicked, but also the godly, have their time to depart this life. And the beggar died. The saints of the Lord, they must be deprived of this life also; they must yield up the ghost into the hands of the Lord their God; they must also be separated from their wives, children, husbands, friends, goods, and all that they have in the world. For God hath decreed it; it is appointed, namely, by the Lord, *for men once to die, and we must appear before the judgement-seat of Christ*, as it is, 2 Cor. 5. 10, 11. But it may be objected, If the godly die as well as the wicked, and if the saints must appear before the judgement-seat, as well as the sinners; then what advantage have the godly more than the ungodly? and how can the saints be in a better condition than the wicked?

Ans. Read the 22d verse over again, and you will find a marvellous difference between them, as much as is between heaven and hell, everlasting joy and everlasting torments; for you find, that when the beggar died, which represents the godly, he was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom, or into everlasting joy, Psal. 1. But the ungodly are not so, but are hurried by the devils into the bottomless pit.

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drawn away in their wickedness, Prov. 14. 32.; for he saith, *And in hell he lift up his eyes.* When the ungodly do die, their misery beginneth, for then appear the devils, like so many lions; waiting every moment till the soul depart from the body. Sometimes they are visible to the dying party, but sometimes more invisible; but always this is certain, they never miss of the soul, if it do die out of the Lord Jesus Christ, but do haul it away to the prison, as I said before, there to be tormented and reserved until the great and dreadful day of judgement, at which day they must, body and soul, receive a final sentence from the righteous Judge, and from that time be shut out from the presence of God into everlasting wo and distress. But the godly, when the time of their departure is at hand, then also are the angels of the Lord at hand; yea, they are ready waiting upon the soul to conduct it safe into Abraham's bosom. I do not say but the devils are oft-times very busy doubtless, and attending the saints in their sickness; ay, and no question but they would willingly deprive the soul of glory. But here is the comfort, as the devils come from hell to devour the soul, (if it be possible at its departure); so the angels of the Lord come from heaven, to watch over and conduct the soul (in spite of the devils) safe into Abraham's bosom.

David had the comfort of this, and speaks it forth for the comfort of his brethren, Psal. 34. 7. saying, *The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them.* Mark, the angel of the Lord encampeth round about his children; to deliver them: From what? From their enemies; of which the devil is not the least. This is an excellent comfort at any time, to have the holy angels of God to attend a poor man or woman; but especially it is comfortable in the time of distress, at the time of death, when the devils beset the soul with all the power that hell can afford them. But now it may be, that the glorious angels of God do not appear at the first to the view of the soul; nay, rather, hell stands before it, and the devils ready, as if they would

carry it thither; but this is the comfort, the angels do always appear at the last, and will not fail the soul, but will carry it safe into Abraham's bosom. Ah friends! consider here is an ungodly man upon his deathbed, and he hath none to speak for him, none to speak comfort unto him; but it is not so with the children of God, for they have the Spirit to comfort them. Here are the ungodly, and they have no Christ to pray for their safe conduct to glory; but the saints have an intercessor, Job 17. 9. Here is the world, when they die, they have none of the angels of God to attend upon them; but the saints have their company. In a word, the unconverted person when he dies, he sinks into the bottomless pit; but the saints, when they die, do ascend with, and by the angels, into Abraham's bosom, or into unspeakable glory, Luke 23. 43.

Again, it is said, that the rich man when he died, was buried, or put into the earth; but when the beggar died, he was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom. The one is a very excellent style, where he saith, he was carried by angels into Abraham's bosom; it denotes the excellent condition of the saints of God, as I said before; and not only so, *but also the preciousness of the death of the saints in the eyes of the Lord*, Psal. 116. 15.; that after generations may see how precious in the sight of the Lord the death of his saints is; when he saith, they are carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom.

Thus many times the Lord adorneth the death and departure of his saints, to hold forth to after generations how excellent they are in his eyes. It is said of Enoch, that God took him; of Abraham, that he died in a good old age; of Moses, that the Lord buried him; of Elijah, that he was taken up into heaven; that the saints sleep in Jesus; that they die in the Lord; that they rest from their labours; that their works follow them; that they are under the altar; that they are with Christ; that they are in light; that they are to come with the Lord Jesus to judge the world. All which sayings signify thus much,

much, That to die as a saint, is a very great honour and dignity. But the ungodly are not so. The rich or ungodly die and are buried, he is carried from his dwelling to his grave, and there he is buried, hid in the dust, and his body doth not so fast moulder and come to nought there, but his name doth stink as fast in the world. As saith the holy scripture, *The name of the wicked shall rot.* And indeed, the names of the godly are not in so much honour after their departure, but the wicked and their names do as much rot. What a dishonour to posterity was the death of Balaam, Agag, Ahitophel, Haman, Judas, Herod, with the rest of their companions?

Thus the wicked have their names written in the earth, and they do perish and rot, and the name of the saints casts forth a dainty favour to following generations; and that the Lord Jesus doth signify where he saith, *The godly are carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom.* And the wicked are nothing worth, where he saith, *The ungodly die and are buried.*

Ver. 23. *And in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom.*

THE former verse speaks only of the departure of the ungodly out of this life, together with the glorious conduct that the godly have into the kingdom of their Father. Now, our Lord doth shew in this verse, partly what doth and shall befall to the reprobate, after this life is ended, where he saith, *And in hell he lift up his eyes.* That is, the ungodly, after they depart this life, do lift up their eyes in hell. From these words may be observed these things.

1. That there is an hell for souls to be tormented in, when this life is ended. Mark, after he was dead and buried, *In hell he lift up his eyes.*

2. That all that are ungodly, and do live and die in their sins, so soon as ever they die, they go into hell: He died and was buried, *and in hell he lift up his eyes.*

3. That

3. That some are so fast asleep, and secure in their sins, that they scarce know well where they are till they come into hell, and that I gather from these words, *In hell he lift up his eyes.* He was asleep before, but hell makes him lift up his eyes.

As I said before, it is evident there is an hell for souls, yea, and bodies too, to be tormented in after they depart this life, as is clear; first, because the Lord Jesus Christ, that cannot lie, did say, that after the sinner was dead and buried, *in hell he lift up his eyes.*

Now, if it be objected, that by hell is here meant the grave, that I plainly deny:

1. Because there the body is not sensible of torment or ease; but in that hell into which the spirits of the damned depart, they are sensible of torment, and would very willingly be free from it, to enjoy ease, which they are sensible of the want of; as is clearly discovered in this parable, *Send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, to cool my tongue.*

2. It is not meant the grave, but some other place; because the bodies, so long as they lie there, are not capable of lifting up their eyes to see the glorious condition of the children of God, as the souls of the damned do. *In hell he lift up his eyes.*

3. It cannot be the grave; for then it must follow, that the soul was buried there with the body, which cannot stand with such a dead state as is here mentioned; for he saith, *The rich man died*; that is, his soul was separated from his body; and *in hell he lift up his eyes.*

If it be again objected, That there is no hell but in this life, that I do also deny, as I said before: After he was dead and buried, *In hell he lift up his eyes.* And let me tell thee, O soul, whoever thou art, and if thou close not in savingly with the Lord Jesus Christ, and lay hold on what he hath done, and is doing in his own person for sinners, thou wilt find such an hell after this life is ended, that thou wilt not get out of again for ever and ever. And thou that art wanton, and dost make but a mock at the

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servants of the Lord, when they tell thee of the torments of hell, thou wilt find, that when thou departest out of this life, that hell, even the hell which is after this life, will meet thee in thy journey thither, and will, with its hellish crew, give thee such a sad salutation, that thou wilt not forget it to all eternity; when that scripture comes to be fulfilled on thy soul in Isa. 14. 9. *Hell from beneath is moved for thee to meet thee at thy coming: It stirreth up the dead for thee, even all the chief ones of the earth: It hath raised from their thrones all the kings of the nations. All they, that is, that are in hell, shall say, Art thou become weak as we? Art thou become like unto us? O! sometimes when I have had but thoughts of going to hell, and consider the everlastingness of their ruin that fall in thither, it hath stirred me up rather to seek to the Lord Jesus Christ to deliver me from thence, than to slight it, and make a mock at it.*

And in hell he lift up his eyes. The second thing I told you was this, That all the ungodly that live and die in their sins, so soon as ever they depart this life, do descend into hell. This is also verified by the words in this parable, where Christ saith, *He died and was buried, and in hell he lift up his eyes. As the tree falls, so it shall lie, whether it be to heaven or hell, Eccles. 11. 3.* And as Christ said to the thief on the cross, *This day shalt thou be with me in paradise;* even so the devil, in the like manner, may say unto the soul, *To-morrow shalt thou be with me in hell.* See then what a miserable case he that dies in an unregenerate state is in; he departs from a long sickness to a longer hell; for the grippings of death to the everlasting torments of hell. *And in hell he lift up his eyes.* Ah, friends! If you were but yourselves, you would have a care of your souls; if you did but regard, you would see how mad they are that slight the salvation of their souls. *O what will it profit thy soul to have pleasure in this life, and torment in hell!* Mark 8. 36. Thou hadst better part with all thy sins and pleasures, and companions, or whatsoever thou delightest in, than to have soul and body cast

cast into hell. O then do not neglect our Lord Jesus Christ, lest thou drop down to hell! Heb. 2. 3. Consider, would it not wound thee to thine heart, to come upon thy death-bed, and instead of having the comfort of a well-spent life, and the merits of the Lord Jesus Christ, together with the comfort of his glorious Spirit, to have, first, the sight of an ill-spent life, thy sins flying in thy face, thy conscience uttering of itself with thunder-claps against thee, the thoughts of God terrifying of thee, death, with his merciless paw, seizing upon thee, the devils standing ready to scramble for thy soul, and hell enlarging herself, and ready to swallow thee up; and an eternity of misery and torment attending upon thee, from which there will be no release. For, mark, death doth not come alone to an unconverted soul, but with such company, as wast thou but sensible of, it would make thee tremble. I pray consider that scripture, Rev. 6. 8. *And I looked and behold a pale horse, and his name that sat upon him was death, and hell followed with him.* Mark, death doth not come alone to the ungodly, no, but hell goeth with him. O miserable comforters! O miserable society! Here comes death and hell unto thee. Death goeth into thy body, and separates body and soul asunder; hell stands without (as I may say) to embrace, or rather, to crush thy soul between its everlasting grinders. Then thy mirth, thy joy, thy sinful delights, will be ended when this comes to pass. Lo it will come. Blessed are all those, that through Jesus Christ's mercies, by faith, do escape these soul-murdering companions. *And in hell he lift up his eyes.*

The third thing, you know, that we did observe from these words, was this, That some are so fast asleep, and secure in their sins, that they scarce know where they are, until they come into hell. And that I told you, I gather by these words, *In hell he lift up his eyes*: mark, it was in hell that he lift up his eyes. Now some do understand by these words, that he came to himself, or began to consider with himself, or to think with himself, in what an estate he was, and

and what he was deprived of; which is still a confirmation of the thing laid down by me. There it is that they come to themselves, that is, there they are sensible where they are indeed. Thus it fares with some men, that they scarce know where they are, till they lift up their eyes in hell. It is with those people as with those that fall down in a swoon; you know if a man do fall down in a swoon in one room, though you take him up and carry him into another, yet he is not sensible where he is till he cometh unto himself, and lifts up his eyes.

Truly, thus, as it is to be feared, it is with many poor souls, they are so senseless, so hard, so seared in their conscience, 1 Tim. 4. 2. that they are very ignorant of their state; and when death comes, it strikes them as it were into a swoon, (especially if they die suddenly), and so they are hurried away, and scarce know where they are, till in hell they lift up their eyes: this is he who dieth in his full strength, fully at ease and quiet, Job 21. 23.

Of this sort are they spoken of in Psal. 37. where he saith, *There are no bonds in their death, but their strength is firm: They are not troubled as other folk, neither are they plagued like other men. And again, they spend their days in wealth, and in a moment, mark, in a moment, before they are aware, they go down into the grave, Job 21. 17.*

Indeed this is too much known by woful and daily experience; sometimes when we go to visit them that are sick in the towns and places where we live, O how senseless, how seared in their conscience are they! They are neither sensible of heaven or of hell; of sin nor of a Saviour; speak to them of their condition and the state of their souls, and you shall find them as ignorant as if they had no souls to regard. Others, though they lie ready to die, yet they are busying themselves about their outward affairs, as though they should certainly live here, even to live and enjoy the same for ever. Again, come to others, speak to them about the state of their souls, though they have no more experience of the new birth than a

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beast,

beast, yet will they speak as confidently of their eternal estate, and the welfare of their souls, as if they had the most excellent experience of any man or woman in the world, saying, *I shall have peace*, Deut. 29. 19. when, as I said even now, the Lord knows they are as ignorant of the new birth, of the nature and operation of faith, of the witness of the Spirit, as if there were no new birth, no faith, no witness of the Spirit of Christ in any of the saints in the world. Nay, thus many of them are, even an hour or less before their departure. Ah, poor souls! though they may go away here like a lamb, as the world says, yet if you could but follow them a little, to stand and listen, soon after their departure; it is to be feared, you shall hear them roar like a lion, at their first entrance into hell, far worse than ever did Korah, &c. when they went down quick into the ground, Numb. 16. 31.—36.

Now by this one thing doth the devil take great advantage on the hearts of the ignorant, suggesting unto them, that because the party deceased departed so quietly, without all doubt they are gone to rest and joy; when, alas! it is to be feared, the reason why they went away so quietly, was rather because they were senseless and hardened in their conscience; yea, dead before in sins and trespasses. For had they but some awakenings on their death-beds, as some have had, they would have made all the town ring of their doleful condition; but because they are scared and ignorant, and so depart quietly, therefore the world takes heart at grass (as we use to say), and makes no great matter of living and dying they cannot tell how: *Therefore pride compasseth them as a chain*, Psal. 73. 5, 6. But let them look to themselves, for if they have not an interest in the Lord Jesus now while they live in the world, they will, whether they die raging or still, go unto the same place, and lift up their eyes in hell.

O my friends, did you but know what a miserable condition they are in, that go out of this world without an interest in the Son of God, it would make you
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smite upon your thigh, and in the bitterness of your souls cry out, Acts 16. 29, 30, 31. *Men and brethren, what shall we do to be saved?* And not only so, but thou wouldst not be comforted until thou didst find a rest for thy soul in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Ver. 23. *And in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom.*

Something in brief I have observed, from the first part of this verse, namely, from these words, *And in hell he lift up his eyes.* And indeed I have observed but some things, for they are very full of matter, and many things might be taken notice of in them. There is one thing more that I might touch upon, as couched in this saying, and that is this. Methinks the Lord Jesus Christ doth hereby signify, that men are naturally unwilling to see or to take notice of their sad state, I say by nature; but, though now they are willingly ignorant, yet in hell they shall lift up their eyes. That is, in hell they shall see and understand their miserable condition; and therefore to these words, *In hell he lift up his eyes*, he adds, *being in torment.* As if he had said, though once they shut their eyes, though once they were (2 Pet. 3. 5.) willingly ignorant, yet when they depart into hell, they shall be so miserably handled and tormented, that they shall be forced to lift up their eyes. While men live in this world, and are in a natural state, they will have a good conceit of themselves, and of their condition; they will conclude that they are Christians, that Abraham is their father, Matth. 3. 7, 8. and their state to be as good as the best; they will conclude they have faith, the Spirit, good hope, an interest in the Lord Jesus Christ: but when they drop into hell, and lift up their eyes there, and behold, first their souls to be in extreme torments; their dwelling to be the bottomless pit; their company thousands of damned souls; also the innumerable company of devils; and the hot scalding vengeance of God, not only to drop, but to fall very violently upon them; then they will be awakened, who all

their lifetime were in a sleep; I say, when this comes to pass, for so it will, then in hell they shall lift up their eyes, in the midst of torment they shall lift up their eyes.

Again, you may observe in these words, *And in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments*, that ungodly men will smart for their sins, in the torments of hell. Now here I am put to a stand, when I consider the torments of hell into which the damned do fall: O unspeakable torments! O endless torments! Now that thy soul might be made to flee from those intolerable torments into which the damned do go, I shall shew you briefly what are the torments of hell. First, by the names of it. Secondly, by the sad state thou wilt be in, if thou comest there. First, the names; it is called a never-dying worm, Mark 9.; it is called an oven-fire, hot, Mal. 4. 1.; it is called a furnace, a fiery furnace, Matth. 13.; it is called the bottomless pit, the unquenchable fire, fire and brimstone, hell-fire, the lake of fire, devouring fire, everlasting fire, eternal fire, a stream of fire, Rev. 21.

1. One part of thy torments will be this, thou shalt have a full sight of all thy ill-spent life from first to last; though here thou canst sin to-day, and forget it by to-morrow; yet there thou shalt be made to remember how thou didst sin against God at such a time, and in such a place, for such a thing, and with such a one, which will be an hell unto thee, Psal. 50. 21. *God will set them in order before thine eyes.*

2. Thou shalt have the guilt of them all lie heavy on thy soul, not only the guilt of one or two, but the guilt of them all together, and there they shall lie in thy soul, as if thy belly were full of pitch, and set on a light fire. Here men can sometimes think on their sins with delight, but there with unspeakable torment; for that I understand to be the fire that Christ speaketh of, which shall never be quenched, Mark 3. 43.—47. While men live here, O how doth the guilt of one sin sometimes crush the soul! It makes a man in such plight, that he is weary of his

his life, so that he can neither rest at home nor abroad, neither up nor in bed. Nay, I do know, that they have been so tormented with the guilt of one sinful thought, that they have been even at their wits ends, and have hanged themselves. But now when thou comest into hell, and hast not only one or two, or an hundred sins, with the guilt of them all on thy soul and body, but all the sins that ever thou didst commit since thou camest into the world, all together clapped on thy conscience at one time, as one should clap a red hot iron to thy breast, and there to continue to all eternity; this is miserable.

3. Again, then thou shalt have brought into thy remembrance, the slighting of the gospel of Christ; here thou shalt consider how willing Christ was to come into the world to save sinners, and for what a trifle thou didst reject him. This is plainly held forth in Isa. 28. where, speaking of the Lord Jesus Christ, the foundation of salvation, v. 16. he saith of them that reject the gospel, that when the overflowing scourge doth pass through the earth, (which I understand to be at the end of the world), then saith he, *It shall take you morning by morning, by day and by night shall it pass over you; that is, continually without any intermission. And it shall be a vexation only to hear the report.* A vexation, that is a torment, or a great part of hell only to understand the report, to understand the good tidings that came into the world by Christ's death for poor sinners. And you will find this verily to be the mind of the Spirit, if you compare it with Isa. 53. 1. where he speaks of mens turning their backs upon the tenders of God's grace in the gospel, he saith, *Who hath believed our report, or the gospel declared by us?* Now this will be a mighty torment to the ungodly, when they shall understand the goodness of God was so great, that he even sent his Son out of his bosom to die for sinners, and yet that they should be so foolish, as to put him off from one time to another; that they should be so foolish, as to lose heaven and Christ, and eternal life in glory, for the society of a company of drunkards;

ards; that they should lose their souls for a little sport, for this world, for a trumpet, for that which is lighter than vanity and nothing; I say this will be a very great torment unto thee.

Another part of thy torment will be this: Thou shalt see thy friends, thy acquaintance, thy neighbours; nay, it may be thy father, thy mother, thy wife, thy husband, thy children, thy brother, thy sister, with others, in the kingdom of heaven, and thyself thrust out, Luke 13. 28. There shall be weeping, &c. when you shall see Abraham, (your father), and Isaac, and Jacob, (together with your brethren), the prophets, in the kingdom of heaven, and you yourselves thrust out. Nay, saith he, *They shall come from the east, and from the west*, that is, those that thou didst never see in all thy life before, and they shall sit down with thy friends, and thy neighbours, thy wife and children, in the kingdom of heaven, and thou, for thy sins and disobedience, shalt be shut, nay, thrust out. O wonderful torment!

5. Again, thou shalt have none but a company of damned souls, with an innumerable company of devils, to keep company with thee. While thou art in this world, the very thoughts of the devils appearing to thee makes thy flesh to tremble, and thine hair ready to stand upright on thy head. But O! What wilt thou do, when not only the supposition of the devil's appearing, but the real society of all the devils of hell will be with thee howling and roaring, screeching and roaring in such a hideous manner, that thou wilt be even at thy wits end, and be ready to run stark mad again for anguish and torment!

6. Again, that thou mightest be tormented to purpose, the mighty God of heaven will lay as great wrath and vengeance upon thee as ever he can, by the might of his glorious power. As I said before, thou shalt have his wrath, not by drops, but by whole showers shall it come, thunder, upon thy body and soul so fast and so thick, that thou shalt be tormented out of measure. And so saith the scripture, 2 Thess.

1. 9. speaking of the wicked, *Who shall be punished with*

The groans of a damned soul.

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with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power, when the saints shall be admiring his goodness and glory.

Again, this thou shalt have, as I said before, without any intermission; thou shalt not have any ease so long as while a man may turn himself round; thou shalt have it always, every hour, day and night; for their worm never dies, but always gnaws, and their fire is never quenched, as it is written in Mark 9.

Again, in this condition thou must be for ever, and that is as sad as all the rest. For if a man were to have all his sins laid to his charge, and communion with the devils, and as much wrath as the great God of heaven can inflict upon him, I say, if it were but for a time, even ten thousand years, and so end, there would be ground of comfort, and hopes of deliverance; but here is thy misery, this is thy state for ever, here thou must be for ever; when thou lookest about thee, and seest what an innumerable company of howling devils thou art amongst, thou shalt think this again, this is my portion for ever. When thou hast been in hell so many thousand years as there are stars in the firmament, or drops in the sea, or sands on the sea-shore, yet thou hast to lie there for ever. O this one word EVER, how will it torment thy soul!

Friends, I have only given a very short touch of the torments of hell. O! I am set, I am set, and am not able to utter what my mind conceives of the torments of hell. Yet this let me say to thee, Accept of God's mercy through our Lord Jesus Christ, lest thou feel that with thy conscience which I cannot express with my tongue, and say, I am sorely tormented in this flame.

And seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom.

When the damned are in this pitiful state, surrounded with fears, with terrors, with torment and vengeance, one thing they shall have, which is this, they shall see the happy and blessed state of God's children: He seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in

in his bosom; which, as I said before, is the happy state of the saints when this life is ended. This now shall be so far from being an ease unto them, that it shall most wonderfully aggravate or heighten their torment, as I said before. There shall be weeping, and cause of lamentation, when they shall see Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven, and themselves thrust out.

2. Observe, Those that die in their sins are far from going to heaven: He seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom. And indeed, it is just with God to deal with them that die in their sins according to what they have done, and to make them who are far from righteousness now, to stand far from heaven to all eternity. Harken to this, ye stout-hearted, that are far from righteousness, and that are resolved to go on in your sins, when you die you will be far from heaven; you will see Lazarus, but it will be afar off.

Again, *He seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom.*

These are some of the things the damned do behold, so soon as they come into torment. Mark, *And he seeth Lazarus in Abraham's bosom.* Lazarus, who was he? Why, even he that was so slighted, so disregarded, so undervalued, by this ungodly one while he was in the world: He seeth Lazarus in his bosom.

From whence observe, That those who live and die the enemies of the saints of God, let them be never so great and stout, let them bear never so much sway while they are in the world, let them brag and boast never so much while they are here, they shall in spite of their teeth see the saints, yea, the poor saints, even the Lazaruses, or the ragged ones that belong to Jesus, to be in a better condition than themselves. O! who do you think was in the best condition? who do you think saw themselves in the best condition, he that was in hell, or he that was in heaven? he that was in darkness, or he that was in light? he that was in everlasting joy, or he that was in

In everlasting torments? The one with God, Christ, saints, angels, the other in tormenting flames, under the curse of God's eternal hatred, with the devils and their angels, together with an innumerable company of howling, roaring, cursing, ever-burning reprobates? Certainly this observation will be easily proved to be true here in this world, by him that looks upon it with an understanding heart, and will clear itself to be true in the world to come, by such as shall go either to heaven or to hell.

2. The second observation, from these words, *And seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom*, is this, They that are the persecutors of the saints of the Lord now in this world, shall see the Lord's persecuted ones to be they that are so highly esteemed by the Lord, as to sit or to be in Abraham's bosom, (in everlasting glory), though the enemies to the children of God did so lightly esteem them, that they scorned to let them gather up the dogs meat that fell under their table. This is also verified, and held forth plainly by this parable. And therefore be not grieved, O you that are tempted, persecuted, afflicted, sighing, praying saints of the Lord, though your adversaries look upon you now with a disdainful, surly, rugged, proud and haughty countenance, yet the time shall come when they shall spy you in Abraham's bosom!

I might enlarge upon these things, but shall leave them to the Spirit of the Lord, which can better by ten thousand degrees enlarge them on thy heart and conscience, than I can upon a piece of paper. Therefore, leaving these to the blessing of the Lord, I shall come to the next verse, and shall be brief in speaking to that also, and so pass to the rest.

Ver. 24. *And he cried, and said, Father Abraham, have mercy upon me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame.*

YOU know I told you, that ver. 22. is a discovery of the departure of the godly and the ungodly

out of this life; where he saith, *The beggar died, and the rich man also died.* The 23d verse is a discovery of the proper places, both of the godly and ungodly after death; one being in Abraham's bosom, or in glory, the other in hell. Now, verse 24. is a discovery of part of the too late repentance of the ungodly, when they are dropped down into hell. *And he cried, and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me.*

From the words, *And he cried*, we may observe, first, What a change the ungodly will have when they come into hell. *He cried*: It is like he was laughing, jesting, jeering, drinking, mocking, swearing, cursing, prating, persecuting of the godly in his prosperity, among his filthy companions. But now the case is otherwise; now he is in another frame, now his proud, stout, curriish carriage is come down. *And he cried.* The laughter of the ungodly will not last always, but will be sure to end in a cry. *The triumphing of the wicked is short*, Job 20. 5. Consider, you must have a change either here or in hell. If you be not new creatures, regenerate persons, new-born babes in this world, before you go hence, your note will be changed, your conditions will be changed; for if you come into hell, you must cry. O, did but the singing drunkards, when they are making merry on the ale-house-bench, think on this, it would make them change their note, and cry, What shall I do? Whither shall I go when I die? But as I said before, the devil, as he labours to get poor souls to follow their sins, so he labours also to keep the thoughts of eternal damnation out of their minds: And indeed these two things are so nearly linked together, that the devil cannot well get the soul to go on in sin with delight, unless he can keep the thoughts of that terrible after-clap out of their minds.

But let them know, that it shall not always be thus with them; for if when they depart, they drop down into eternal destruction, they shall have such a sense of their sins, and the punishment due to the same, that it shall make them to cry. *And he cried.* O what

what an alteration will there be among the ungodly when they go out of this world! It may be a fortnight, or a month, before their departure, they were light, stout, furly, drinking themselves drunk, slighting God's people, mocking at goodness, and delighting in sin, following the world, seeking after riches, faring deliciously, keeping company with the bravest, but now they are dropped down into hell, they cry. A little while ago they were painting their faces, feeding their lusts, following their whores, robbing their neighbours, telling of lies, following of plays and sports to pass away the time; but now they are in hell, they do cry. It may be last year they heard some good sermons, were invited to receive heaven, were told their sins should be pardoned if they closed in with Jesus: but refusing his proffers and slighting the grace that was once tendered, they are now in hell, and do cry.

Before they had so much time, they thought that they could not tell how to spend it, unless it were in hunting, and whoring, in dancing, and playing, and spending whole hours, yea, days, nay, weeks, in the lusts of the flesh: but when they depart into another place, and begin to lift up their eyes in hell, and consider their miserable, and irrecoverable condition, they will cry.

O what a condition wilt thou fall into, when thou dost depart this world! If thou depart unconverted, and not born again, thou hadst better have been smothered the first hour thou wast born; thou hadst better have been plucked one limb from another; thou hadst better have been made a dog, a toad, a serpent, nay, any other creature in the visible world, than to die unconverted; and this thou wilt find to be true, when in hell thou dost lift thine eyes, and dost cry.

Here then, before we go any further, you may see that it is not without good ground that these words are here spoken by our Lord, that when any of the ungodly do depart into hell, they will cry. Cry; why so?

1. They will cry to think that they should be cut off from the land of the living, never more to have any footing therein,

2. They will cry to think that the gospel of Christ should be so often proffered to them, and yet they are not profited by it.

3. They will cry to think that now, though they would never so willingly repent and be saved, yet they are past all recovery.

4. They will cry to think that they should be so foolish as to follow their pleasures, when others were following of Christ, Luke 13. 28.

5. They will cry to think that they must be separated from God, Christ, and the kingdom of heaven, and that for ever.

6. To think that their crying will now do them no good.

7. To think that at the day of judgement they must stand at the left hand of Christ, among an innumerable company of damned ones.

8. They will cry to think, that Lazarus, whom once they slighted, must be of them that must sit down with Christ to judge, or together with Christ, to pass a sentence of condemnation on their souls for ever, 1 Cor. 6. 2, 3.

9. Cry to think, that when the judgement is over, and others are taken into the everlasting kingdom of glory, then they must depart back again into that dungeon of darkness from whence they came out, (to appear before the terrible tribunal), where they shall be tormented so long as eternity lasts, without the least intermission or ease.

How sayest thou, O thou wanton, proud, swearing, lying, ungodly wretch! whether this be to be slighted and made a mock at: And again, tell me now if it be not better to leave sin and to close in with Christ Jesus, notwithstanding that reproach thou shalt meet with for so doing, than to live a little while in this world in pleasures, and feeding thy lusts, in neglecting the welfare of thy soul, and refusing to be justified by Jesus; and in a moment to drop down

hell, and to cry? O consider, I say, consider betimes, and put not off the tenders of the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, lest you lift up your eyes in hell, and cry for anguish of spirit.

And he cried, and said, Father Abraham, have mercy upon me, and send Lazarus, &c.

These words do not only hold forth the lamentable condition of the damned, and their lamentable howling and crying out under their anguish of spirit, but also they do signify to us (as I said before) their too late repentance; and also that they would very willingly, if they might, be set at liberty from that everlasting misery, that by their sins they have plunged themselves into. I say, these words do hold a desire that the damned have, to be delivered from those torments that they now are in: *O father Abraham, saith he, have mercy upon me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue, for I am tormented in this flame.* These words, *Father Abraham*, may have some difficulty in them. It is possible that some may think them to be meant of Abraham; and those, or him that crieth out here, to be the Jews. Or it may be some may understand it to be God, or Jesus Christ his Son, which I rather suppose it may be, that is here cried unto; because you find the same cry to him as it were uttered by the ungodly in other places of scripture; as in Luke 13. 25, 26. *Then shall they say, Lord, Lord, we have eat and drank in thy presence, and thou hast taught in our streets.* Nay more, *In thy name have we cast out devils, and in thy name done many wonderful works.* This was just at their rejection. And again, in Matth. 25. 11. *They cry again to him, even to Jesus, Lord, Lord, open to us.* And he there again gives them a repulse, as also in this parable. But however, or whosoever Abraham is, yet these truths may be observed from the words.

1. That the damned, when in an irrecoverable estate, will seek for, or desire deliverance from the wrath that they are and shall be in for eternity. Surely

ly in the floods of great waters they shall not come nigh unto him.

2. That they will pray (if I may so call it) earnestly for deliverance from their miserable estate. These two things are clear from the words. For mark, he not only said, *Father Abraham have mercy upon me*; but he cried, and said, *Father Abraham, have mercy on me*. From whence take a third observation, and that is, There is a time coming, wherein though men shall both cry and pray, yet they are like to have no mercy at the hand of God: for so was this man served, as I shall further shew by and by, when I come to it.

Some people are so deluded by the devil, as to think, that God is so merciful, as to own and regard any thing for prayer; they think any thing will go for current and good satisfaction, while they are here in this world, through ignorance of the true nature of the mercy of God, and the knowledge in what way God is satisfied for sinners. Now, I say, through ignorance they think, that if they do but mutter over some form of prayers, though they know not what they say, nor what they request, yet God is satisfied, yea, very well satisfied with their doings, when alas! there is nothing less. O friends, I beseech you to look about you, and seek in good earnest for the Spirit of Christ so to help you now, to strive and pray, and to enable you to lay hold on Christ, that your souls may be saved, lest the time come, that though you cry and pray, and wish also that you had laid hold on the Lord Jesus; yet you must and shall be damned.

Then again, you may see that though God be willing to save sinners at some time, yet this time doth not always last. No, he that can find in his heart to turn his back upon Jesus Christ now, shall have the back turned upon him hereafter, when he may cry and pray for mercy, and yet go without it. God will have a time to meet with them, that now do not seek after him: They shall have a time, yea time enough hereafter to repent their folly, and to beseech themselves, for turning their backs upon the Lord

Lord Jesus Christ. *I will laugh at their calamities, saith he, and mock when their fear cometh, Prov. 1. 26.*

Again, this should admonish us to take time while it is proffered, lest we repent us of our unbelief and rebellion when we are deprived of it. Ah friends! time is precious, an hour's time to hear a sermon is precious: I have sometimes thought thus with myself, Set the case, the Lord should send two or three of his servants, the ministers of the gospel, to hell among the damned, with this commission, Go ye to hell, and preach my grace to those that are there; Let your sermon be an hour long, and hold forth the merits of my Son's birth, righteousness, death, resurrection, ascension and intercession, with all my love in him, and proffer it to them, telling them, that now once, do I proffer the means of reconciliation to them. They who are now roaring, being past hope, would then leap at the least proffer of mercy: Oh they that could spend whole days, weeks, nay years, in rejecting the Son of God, would now be glad of one tender of that mercy. *Father, saith he, have mercy on me.*

Again, from these words you may observe, that mercy would be welcome, when souls are under judgement: Now this soul is in the fire, now he is under the wrath of God, now he is in hell, there to be tormented, now he is with the devils and damned spirits, now he feels the vengeance of God, now, oh now, have mercy upon me! Here you may see, that mercy is prized by them that are in hell; they would be glad if they could have it. *Father, have mercy on me; for my poor soul's sake, send me a little mercy.*

And send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue.

These words do not only hold forth that the ungodly have a desire of mercy, but what those mercies are, what these poor creatures would be glad of.

As, 1. To have the company of a Lazarus granted to them: *Father Abraham, have mercy upon me, and send Lazarus.* Now Lazarus was he that was beloved of God, and also he that was hated of them.

Therefore,

2. Observe

2. Observe, That those saints that the world in their lifetime could not endure, now they are departed, they would be glad to have society with them, O now send Lazarus! Though the time was when I cared not for him, yet now let me have some society with him.

Though the world disregard the society of God's children now, yet there is a time coming, in which they would be glad to have the least company with them. Nay, do but observe, those of the saints that are now most rejected by them, even from them shall they be glad of comfort, if it might be. Send Lazarus! he that I slighted more than my dogs, he that I could not endure should come into my house, but must lie at my gate, send him: Now Lazarus shall be welcome to me, now I desire some comfort from him; but he shall go without it.

From whence again observe, That there is a time coming, O ye surly dogged persecutors of the saints, that they shall slight you as much as ever you slighted them. You have given them many an hard word, told many a lie of them, given them many a blow: And now in your greatest need and extremity they shall not pity you; the righteous shall rather rejoice when he seeth the vengeance of God upon thee, Psal. 58. 10.

And, *Send Lazarus.* From whence observe, That any of the saints shall then be owned by you to be saints. Now you look upon them to be the sect with Hymeneus and Philetus; but then you shall see them to be the Lazaruses of God, even God's dear children. Though now the saints of the Lord will not be owned by you, because they are beggarly, low, poor, contemptible among you; yet the day is coming that you shall own them, desire their company, and wish for the least courtesy from them.

Send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue: for I am tormented in this flame.

Thus shall the souls that abide in their sins, cry out

out in the bitterness of their spirits, with wonderful anguish and torment of conscience, without intermission; *That he may dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue.* That he, namely the man who before I scorned should eat with the dogs of my flock, that before I slighted and had no regard of, that I shut out of door send him, *that he may dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue.*

Now these words, *That he may dip the tip of his finger in water, &c.* do hold forth the least friendship or favour; as if he should have said, Now I would be glad of the least mercy, now I would be glad of the least comfort, though it be but one drop of cold water on the tip of his finger. One would have thought that this had been a small request, a small courtesy, one drop of water, what is that? Take a pail full of it, if that will do thee any good. But mark, he is not permitted to have so much as one drop, not so much as a man may hold on the tip of his finger; this signifies, That they that fall short of Christ, shall be tormented even as long as eternity lasteth, and shall not have so much as the least ease, no not so long as while a man may turn himself round, not so much leave as to swallow his spittle, not one drop of cold water.

O that these things did take place in your hearts, how would it make you to seek after rest for your souls, before it be too late, before the sun of the gospel be set upon you!

Consider, I say, the misery of the ungodly that they shall be in, and avoid their vices, by closing in with the tenders of mercy; lest you partake of the same portion with them, and cry out in the bitterness of your souls, *One drop of cold water to cool my tongue.*

For I am tormented in this flame.

Indeed, the reason why the poor world do not so earnestly desire mercy, is partly because they do not so seriously consider the torment that they must certainly fall into if they die out of Christ. For, let me tell you, did but poor souls indeed consider that

wrath that doth by right fall to their shares, because of their sins against God, they would make more haste to God through Christ for mercy than they do; then we should have them say, It is good closing with Christ to-day, before we fall into such distress.

But why is it said, *Let him dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue?* Because, that as the several members in the body have their share in sin, and committing of that; so the several members of the body shall at that time be punished for the same. Therefore, when Christ is admonishing his disciples, that they should not turn aside from him, and that they should rather fear and dread the power of their God, than another power, he saith, *Fear him therefore, that can cast both body and soul into hell,* Luke 12. 4 And again, *Fear him that can destroy both body and soul in hell.* Here is not one member only, but all the body, the whole body, of which the hands, feet, eyes, ears, and tongue, are members. And I am persuaded that though this may be judged carnal by some now, yet it will appear to be a truth then, to the greater misery of those who shall be forced to undergo that which God in his just judgement shall inflict upon them. O then they will cry, one dram of ease for my cursing, swearing, lying, jeering, tongue! Some ease for my bragging, braving, flattering, threatening, dissembling tongue! Now men can let their tongues run at random, as we use to say; now they will be apt to say, *Our tongues are our own, who shall controul them?* Psal. 12. 4. But then they will be in another mind. Then, O that I might have a little ease for my deceitful tongue! Methinks sometimes to consider, how some men do let their tongues run at random, it makes me marvel. Surely they do not think they shall be made to give an account for their offending with their tongue. Did they but think they shall be made to give an account to him who is ready, *to judge the quick and the dead*, surely they would be more wary of, and have more regard unto their tongue.

The tongue, saith James, is an unruly member full of

*of deadly poison; it setteth on fire the whole frame of nature, and is set on fire of hell, James 2. The tongue, how much mischief will it stir up in a very little time? How many blows and wounds doth it cause? How many times doth it (as James saith) curse man? How oft is the tongue made the conveyer of that hellish poison that is in the heart, both to the dishonour of God, the hurt of its neighbours, and the utter ruin of its own soul? and do you think the Lord will sit still (as I may say) and let thy tongue run as it lists, and yet never bring you to an account for the same? No, stay; The Lord will not always keep silence, but will reprove thee, and set thy sins in order before thine eyes, O sinner: Yea, and thy tongue, together with the rest of thy members, shall be tormented for sinning. And I say, I am very confident, that though this be made light of now, yet the time is coming, when many poor souls will rue the day that ever they did speak with a tongue. O will one say, that I should so disregard my tongue! O that I, when I said so and so, had before bitten off my tongue! that I had been born without a tongue! My tongue, my tongue, a little water to cool my tongue, for I am tormented in this flame! even in that flame which my tongue, together with the rest of my members, by sinning, have brought me to. Poor souls will now let their tongues say any thing for a little profit, for two pence or three pence gain. But O what a grief will this be at that day, when they, together with their tongue, must smart for that which they by their tongues have done while they were in this world. Then you that love your souls, look to your tongues, lest you bind yourselves down so fast to hell with the sins of your tongues, that you will never be able to get loose again to all eternity. For by thy words thou shalt be condemned, if thou have not a care of thy tongue. For I say unto you, *Matth.* that for every idle word that man shall speak, he shall *12. 36.* give an account thereof in the day of judgement.*

Ver. 25. *But Abraham said, Son, remember that thou in thy life-time receivedst thy good things, and like-wise Lazarus evil things; but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented.*

THese words are the answer to the request of the damned. The verse before (as I told you) is a discovery of the desires they have after they depart this world. Here is the answer, *Son, remember, &c.*

The answer signifies thus much, That instead of having any relief or ease, they are hereby the more tormented, and that by fresh recollections, or by bringing afresh their former ill-spent life, while in the world, into their remembrance: *Son, remember thou hadst good things in thy life-time; as much as if he had said, Thou art now sensible what it is to lose thy soul; thou art now sensible what it is to put off repentance; thou art now sensible that thou hast befooled thyself, in that thou didst spend that time in seeking after outward, momentary, earthly things, which thou shouldst have spent in seeking to make Jesus Christ sure to thy soul; and now, through thy anguish of spirit, in the pains of hell thou wouldst enjoy that which in former time thou didst make flight of; but alas! thou art here beguiled and altogether disappointed; thy crying will now avail thee nothing at all. This is not the acceptable time, 2 Cor. 6. 2. This is not a time to answer the desires of damned reprobates; if thou hadst cried out in good earnest while grace was offered, much might have been; but then thou wast careless, and didst turn the forbearance and goodness of God into wantonness. Wast thou not told, that those who would not hear the Lord when he did call, should not be heard (if they turned away from them) when they did call? Prov. 1. 24,—28. But contrariwise, he would laugh at their calamity, and mock when their fear did come.*

Now, therefore, instead of expecting the least drop of mercy and favour, call into thy mind how thou didst spend those days which God did permit thee to live; I say, remember, that in thy lifetime thou didst behave thyself rebelliously against the Lord,

Lord, in that thou wert careless of his word and ordinances, yea, and of the welfare of thine own soul also: Therefore, now, I say, instead of expecting or hoping for any relief, thou must be forced to call to remembrance thy filthy ways, and feed upon them, to thine everlasting astonishment and confusion.

From these words, therefore, which say, *Remember that thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things*, there are these things to be taken notice of.

1. They that by putting off repentance, and living in their sins, lose their souls, shall, instead of having the least measure of comfort when they come into hell, have their ill-spent life always very fresh in their remembrance. While they live here, they can sin and forget it; but when they depart, they shall have it before them; they shall have a remembrance, or their memory notably enlightened, and a clearer, and a continual sight of all their wicked practices that they wrought and did while they were in the world. *Son, remember*, saith he; then you will be made to remember,

1. How you were born in sin, and brought up in the same.

2. Remember how thou hadst many a time the gospel preached to thee for taking away of the same, by him whom the gospel doth hold forth.

3. Remember, that out of love to thy sins and lusts, thou didst turn thy back on the tenders of the same gospel of good tidings and peace.

4. Remember that the reason why thou didst lose thy soul, was because thou didst not close in with free grace, and the tenders of a loving and free-hearted Jesus Christ.

5. Remember how near thou wast to turning at such and such a time, only thou wast willing to give way to thy lusts when they wrought, to drunkards when they called, to pleasures when they proffered themselves, to the cares and incumbrances of the world, which, like so many thorns, did choak that or those convictions that were set on thy heart.

6. Remember how willing thou wast to satisfy thyself

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self with an hypocrite's hope, and with a notion of the things of God, without the real power and life of the same.

7. Remember how thou, when thou wast admonished to turn, didst put off turning and repenting till another time.

8. Remember how thou didst dissemble at such a time, lie at such a time, cheat thy neighbour at such a time, mock, flout, scoff, taunt, hate, persecute the people of God at such a time, in such a place, among such company.

9. Remember, that while others were met together in the fear of the Lord to seek him, thou wast met with a company of vain companions to sin against him; while the saints were a-praying, thou wast a-cursing; while they were speaking good of the name of God, thou wast speaking evil of the saints of God. O then thou shalt have a scalding hot remembrance of all thy sinful thoughts, words, and actions, from the very first to the last of them that ever thou didst commit in all thy lifetime. Then thou wilt find that scripture to be a truth, Deut. 28. 65, 66, 67. *The Lord shall give thee there a trembling heart, and failing of eyes, and sorrow of mind. And thy life shall hang in doubt before thee, and thou shalt fear day and night, and shalt have none assurance of thy life. In the morning thou shalt say, would to God it were evening; for the fear of thine heart where-with thou shalt fear, and for the sight of thine eyes which thou shalt see.* Nay, thou shalt find worse things to thy wo than this scripture doth manifest. For indeed there is no tongue able to express the horror, terror, torment, and eternal misery, that those poor souls shall undergo, without the least mitigation of ease; a very great part of it shall come from that quick, full, and continual remembrance of their sins that they shall have. And therefore there is much weight in these words, *Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime hadst thy good things.*

From these words you see this is to be observed, That the ungodly shall remember, or have in remembrance the mispending their lives: *Remember that in*

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thy lifetime thou hadst thy good things. You may take these words, *good things*, either simply for the things of this world, which in themselves are called and may be called *good things*; or else with these words, namely, *the things of this life*, all the pleasures, delights, profits, and vanities, which the ignorant people of the world do count their good things, and do very much cheer themselves therewith. *Soul, soul, eat, drink, and be merry; for thou hast much goods laid up for many years,* Luke 12. 20. Now, I say God, according to his glorious power and wisdom, will make poor creatures have always in their minds a fresh and clear remembrance of their ill-spent life: He will say unto them, Remember, remember, that in thy lifetime it was thus and thus with thee, and in thy lifetime thy carriage was so and so.

If sinners might have their choice, they would not have their sins and transgressions so much in the remembrance, as it is evident by their carriages here in this world; for they will not endure to entertain a serious thought of their filthy life; they put far away the evil day, Amos 6. 3.; Ezek. 12. 27.; and labour by all means to put the thoughts of it out of their mind; but there they shall be made to remember to purpose, and to think continually of their ungodly deeds. And therefore it is said, that when our Lord Jesus Christ comes to judgement, it will be to convince the ungodly world of their wicked and ungodly deeds; mark, to convince them, Jude 14. 15. They will not willingly take notice of them now; but then they shall, hereafter, in spite of their teeth; for those that die out of Christ, shall be made to see, acknowledge, and confess their guilt, do what they can, when they lift up their eyes in hell, and remember their transgressions. God will be a swift witness against them, Mal. 3. 5. and will say, Remember what thou didst in thy lifetime, how thou didst live in thy lifetime. Ha, friend! If thou dost not in these days of light remember the days of darkness, Eccles. 11. 8. (the days of death, hell, and judge-

judgement), thou shalt be made in the days of darkness, death, hell, and at the judgement too, to remember the days of the gospel, and how thou didst disregard them too, to thy own destruction and everlasting misery. This is intimated in that 25th of St Matthew.

Remember that in thy lifetime thou receivedst thy good things.

The great God, instead of giving the ungodly any ease, will even aggravate their torments; first, by slighting their perplexities, and by telling of them what they must be thinking of: Remember, saith he, O ye lost souls, that you had your joy in your lifetime, your peace in your lifetime, your comforts, delights, ease, wealth, health; your heaven, your happiness, and your portion in your lifetime.

O miserable state! Thou wilt then be in a sad condition indeed, when thou shalt see that thou hast had thy good things, thy best things, thy pleasant things; for that is clearly signified by these words, *Remember that thou in thy lifetime hadst thy good things*, or all the good things thou art like to have. From whence take notice of another truth, (though it be a dreadful one), which is this: There are many poor creatures who have all their good, sweet, and comfortable things, in this life, or while they are alive in this world: *Remember, saith he, that in thy lifetime thou hadst thy good things*, Psal. 17. 14.

The wicked's good things will shortly have an end; they will last no longer with them than this life, or their lifetime. That scripture was not written in vain: It is like the crackling of thorns under a pot, makes a little blaze for a sudden, a little heat for a while; but come and consider them by and by, and instead of a comfortable heat, you will find nothing but a few dead ashes; and instead of a flaming fire, nothing but a smell of smoke.

There is a time coming, that the ungodly would be glad of a better portion, when they shall see the vanity of this, that is, when they shall see what a poor thing it is, for a man to have his portion in this world

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world. It is true, while they are here on this side hell, they think there is nothing to be compared with riches, honours, and pleasures in this world; which makes them cry out, *Who will shew us any good*, Psal. 4. 7. that is comparable to the pleasures, profits, and glory of this world? But then they will see there is another thing that is better and of more value than ten thousand worlds. And seriously, friends, will it not grieve you, trouble, perplex, and torment you, when you shall see that you lost heaven for a little pleasure and profit in your lifetime? Certainly it will grieve you and perplex you exceedingly, to see what a blessed heaven you left for a dunghill-world. Oh! that you did but believe this! that you did but consider this, and say within yourselves, What! shall I be contented with my portion in this world! What! shall I lose heaven for this world! I say, consider it while you have day-light, and gospel-light, while the Son of God doth hold out terms of reconciliation to you, lest you be made to hear such a voice as this is, *Son, Remember that in thy lifetime thou receivedst thy good things*; thy comforts, thy joys, thy ease, thy peace, and all the heaven thou art like to have. O poor heaven! O short pleasures! What a pitiful thing it is to be left in such a case! Soul, consider, Is it not miserable to lose heaven, for twenty, thirty, or forty years sinning against God? When thy life is done, thy heaven is also done? when death comes to separate thy soul and body, in that day also thou must have thy heaven and happiness separated from thee, and thou from that. Consider these things betimes, lest thou have thy portion in thy lifetime. *For if in this life only we have our portion, we are of all people the most miserable*; 1 Cor. 15. 19. Again, consider that when others men (the saints) are to receive their good things, then thou hast had thine: When others are to enter into joy, then thou art to leave and depart from thy joy: when others are to go to God, thou must go to the devil. O miserable! Thou hadst better thou hadst never been born, than to be an heir of

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such a portion; therefore, I say, have a care lit be not thy condition.

Remember that thou receivedst thy good things, and Lazarus evil things.

These words do not only hold forth the misery of the wicked in this life, but also great consolation to the saints; where he saith, *And Lazarus evil things*, that is, Lazarus had his evil things in his lifetime, or when he was in the world :

From whence observe,

1. That the life of the saints, so long as they are in this world, is attended with many evils or afflictions : which may be discovered to be of divers natures; as saith the scripture, *Many are the troubles of the righteous, but the Lord delivereth him out of them all.*

2. Take notice, that the afflictions or evils that accompany the saints, may continue with them their lifetime, so long as they live in this vale of tears; yea, and they may be divers, that is, of several sorts some outward, some inward, and that as long as they shall continue here below, as hath been the experience of all saints in all ages; and this might be proved at large, but I only hint at these things, though I might enlarge much upon them.

3. The evils that do accompany the saints will continue no longer with them than their lifetime; and here indeed lies the comfort of believers, the Lazaruses, the saints, they must have all their bitter cup wrung up to them in their lifetime: Here must be all their trouble, here must be all their grief. *Behold*, saith Christ, *the world shall rejoice, but ye shall lament; but your mourning shall, mark, it shall be turned into joy*, John 16. 2. You shall lament, you shall be sorrowful, you shall weep in your lifetime, but your sorrow shall be turned into joy, and your joy no man (let him be what he will, no man) shall take away from you. Now if you think, when I say the saints have all their evil things in their lifetime, that I mean, they have nothing else but trouble in this their lifetime, this is your mistake; for let me tell you, That though the saints have all their evil things

things in their lifetime, yet even in their lifetime they have also joy unspeakable, and full of glory, while they look not at the things that are seen, but at the things which are not seen. The joy that the saints have sometimes in their heart, by a believing consideration of the good things to come, when this life is ended, doth fill them fuller of joy, than all the crosses, troubles, temptations, and evils, that accompany them in this life, can fill them with grief, 2 Cor. 4.

But some saints may say, My troubles are such as are ready to overcome me. *Ans.* Yet be of good comfort, they shall last no longer than thy lifetime.

But my trouble is, I am perplexed with an heart full of corruption and sin, so that I am much hindered in walking with God. *Ans.* It is like so, but thou shalt have these troubles no longer than thy lifetime.

But I have a cross husband, and that is a great grief to me.

Well, but thou shalt be troubled with him no longer than thy lifetime, and therefore be not disinayed, be not discomforted, thou shalt have no trouble longer than this lifetime.

Art thou troubled with cross children, cross relations, cross neighbours? They shall trouble thee no longer than this lifetime.

Art thou troubled with a cunning devil, with unbelief? yea, let it be what it will, thou shalt take thy farewell of them all (if thou be a believer) after thy lifetime is ended. O excellent! Then God shall wipe away all tears from your eyes; there shall be no more death nor sorrow, nor crying, nor any more pain; for the former things are passed away.

But now, on the contrary, if thou be not a right and sound believer, then, though thou shouldst live a thousand years in this world, and meet with sore afflictions every day; yet these afflictions, be they never so great and grievous, they are nothing to that torment that will come upon thee, both in soul and body, after this life is ended.

I say, be what thou wilt, if thou be found in unbelief,

belief, or under the first covenant, thou art sure to smart for it at the time when thou dost depart this world. But the thing so lamented is, for all this is so sad a condition to be fallen into, yet poor souls are for the most part senseless of it; yea, so senseless, (at some times), as though there was no such misery to come hereafter: because the Lord doth not immediately strike with his sword, but doth bear long with his creatures, waiting that he might be gracious: therefore, I say, the hearts of some of the sons of men, are wholly set upon it to do mischief, Eccles. 8. 11. And that forbearance and goodness of God, that one would think should lead them to repentance, the devil hardening of them, by their continuing in sin, and by blinding their eyes, as to the end of God's forbearance towards them, they are led away with a very hardened and senseless heart, even until they drop into eternal destruction.

But, poor hearts, they must have a time in which they must be made sensible of their former behaviours, when the just judgements of the Lord shall flame about their ears, insomuch that they shall be made to cry out again with anguish, I am sorely tormented in this flame.

But now he is comforted, and thou art tormented.

And if he should say, Now hath God recompensed both Lazarus and you, according to what you sought after, while you were in this world: As for your part you did neglect the precious mercy and goodness of God; you did turn your back on the Son of God, that came into the world to save sinners; you made a mock of preaching the gospel: you was admonished over and over, to close in with the loving-kindness of the Lord, in his Son Jesus Christ. The Lord let you live twenty, thirty, forty, fifty, sixty years; all which time, you, instead of spending it, *to make your calling and election sure*, 2 Pet. 1. 10. did spend it in making of eternal damnation sure to thy soul. And also Lazarus, he in his lifetime did make it his business to accept of my grace and salvation in the Lord Jesus Christ. When thou wast in the ale-house, he frequented

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frequented the word preached; when thou wert jeering at goodness, *he was sighing for the sins of the times*, Eccles. 9. 4. While thou wert swearing, he was praying: In a word, while thou wert making sure of eternal ruin, he by faith in the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ, was making sure of eternal salvation. Therefore, *now he is comforted, and thou art tormented.*

Here then you may see, that as the righteous shall not be always void of comfort and blessedness: so neither shall the ungodly go always without their punishment. As sure as God is in heaven, it will be thus: they must have their several portions. And therefore, you that are the saints of the Lord, follow on, be not dismayed, *Forasmuch as you know, that your labour is not in vain in the Lord*, 1 Cor. 15. last verse. Your portion is eternal glory. And you that are so loth now to close in with Jesus Christ, and to leave your sins to follow him, your day is coming, Psal. 36. 13. in which you shall know, that your sweet morsels of sin that you so easily rake down, Job 20. 12, 13, 14. and it scarce troubles you, will have a time so to work within you to your eternal ruin, that you will be in a worse condition than if you had ten thousand devils tormenting you: nay, you had better have been plucked limb from limb a thousand times, (if it could be), than to be partakers of this torment, which will assuredly without mercy lie upon you.

Ver. 26. *And besides all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed: so that they which would go from hence to you, cannot, neither can they come to us, that would come from thence.*

THese words are still part of that answer that the souls in hell shall have for all the fobblings, sighings, grievous cries, tears, and desires, that they have to be released out of those intolerable pains they feel and are perplexed with. And, O! methinks the words at the first view, if rightly considered, are enough to make any hard-hearted sinner in the world
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to fall down dead. The verse I last spoke to was, and is a very terrible one, and aggravates the torments of poor sinners wonderfully. Where he saith, *Remember that thou in thy lifetime hadst thy good things. and Lazarus his evil things, &c.* I say, these words are very terrible to those poor souls that die out of Christ. But these latter words do much more hold out their sorrow. They were spoken, as to the present condition of the sinner. These do not only back the former, but do yet further aggravate their misery, holding forth that which will be more intolerable: The former verse is enough to smite any sinner into a swoon, but this is to make them fall down dead; where he saith, *And besides all this;* there is still something to aggravate thy misery yet far more abundantly. I shall briefly speak to the words as they have relation to the terror spoken of in the verses before. As if he had said, Thou thinkest the present state unsupportable, it makes thee sob and sigh, it makes thee to rue the time that ever thou wert born: now thou findest the want of mercy; now thou wouldst leap at the least dram of it; now thou feelest what it is to slight the tenders of the grace of God; now it makes thee to sob, sigh, and roar exceedingly, for the anguish that thou art in. *But besides all this,* I have other things to tell thee of, that will break thine heart indeed. Thou art now deprived of a being in the world; thou art deprived of hearing the gospel; the devil hath been too hard for thee, and hath made thee miss of heaven: thou art now in hell among an innumerable company of devils and all thy sins beset thee round; thou art all over-wrapped in flames, and canst not have one drop of water to give thee any ease; thou criest in vain, for nothing will be granted; thou seest the saints in heaven, which is no small trouble to thy damned soul; thou seest that neither God nor Christ takes any care to ease thee, or speak any comfort unto thee. *But besides all this,* there thou art like to lie; never think of any ease, never look for any comfort; repentance now will do thee no good, the time is past, and can

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never be called again; look what thou hast now, thou must have for ever.

It is true, I spoke enough before to break thine heart asunder; *But besides all this*, there lie and swim in flames for ever: These words, *Besides all this*, are terrible words indeed. I will give you the scope of them in a similitude. Set the case, You should take a man and tie him to a stake, and with red-hot pinchers, pinch off his flesh by little pieces for two or three years together, and at last, when the poor man cries out for ease and help, the tormentors answer, Nay, *but besides all this*, you must be handled worse.

We will serve you thus these twenty years together, and after that we will fill your mangled body full of scalding lead, or run you through with a red hot spit; would not this be lamentable? Yet this is but a flea-biting to the sorrow of those that go to hell; for if a man were served so, there would, ere it were long be an end of him. But he that goes to hell shall suffer ten thousand times worse torments than these, and yet shall never be quite dead under them: There they shall be ever whining, pining, weeping, mourning, ever tormented without ease, and yet never dissolved into nothing: if the biggest devil in hell might pull thee all to pieces, and rend the small as dust, and dissolve thee into nothing, thou wouldst count this a mercy. But here thou mayst lie and fry, scorch, and broil, and burn for ever: for ever, that is a long while, and yet it must be so long. *Depart from me, saith Christ, into everlasting fire, into the fire that burns for ever, prepared for the devil and his angels,* Matth. 25. 41. Oh, thou that wast loth to foul thy foot if it were but dirty, or did but rain; thou that wast loth to come out of the chimney-corner, if the wind did but blow a little cold; and wast loth to go half a mile, yea, half a furlong, to hear the word of God, if it were but a little dark; thou that wast loth to leave a few vain companions, to edify thy soul, thou shalt have fire enough, thou shalt have night enough, and evil company enough, thy belly-full, if thou

thou miss of Jesus Christ; and *besides all this*, thou shalt have them for ever, and for ever.

O thou that dost spend whole nights in carding and dicing, in rioting and wantonness; thou that countest it a brave thing to swear as fast as the bravest, to spend with the greatest spendthrift in the country; thou that lovest to sin in a corner when no body sees thee! O thou that for by-ends dost carry on the hypocrite's profession, because thou wouldst be counted somebody among the children of God, but art an enemy to the things of Christ in thine heart; thou that dost satisfy thyself, either with sins, or a bare profession of godliness, thy soul will fall into extreme torments and anguish, so soon as ever thou dost depart this world, and there thou shalt be weeping and gnashing thy teeth, Matth. 8. 11, 12. And besides all this, thou art like never to have any ease or remedy; never look for any deliverance; thou shalt die in thy sins, and be tormented as many years as there are stars in the firmament, or sands on the sea-shore; and besides all this, thou must abide it for ever.

And besides all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed, so that they which would pass from hence to you, cannot; neither can they come to us that would come from hence. There is a great gulf fixed. You will say, What is that? *Ans.* It is a nice question; therefore first seek thou rather to enter in at the strait gate, than curiously to inquire what this gulf is.

But, 2dly, If thou wouldst needs know, if thou do fall short of heaven, thou wilt find it this, namely, The everlasting decree of God; that is, there is a decree gone forth from God, that those who fall short of heaven in this world, God is resolved they shall never enjoy it in the world to come. And thou wilt find this gulf so deep, that thou shalt never be able to wade through it as long as eternity lasts. As Christ saith, *Agree with thine adversary quickly, while thou art in the way with him, lest he hale thee to the judge, and the judge deliver thee to the officer, and thou be cast into prison: I tell thee thou shalt in no wise come out thence, ("there is the gulf, the decree")*;

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Thou shalt not depart thence till thou hast paid the utmost farthing, or very last mite, Luke 12. 58, 59. These words, therefore; There is a great gulf fixed, I do understand to be the everlasting decree of God. God hath decreed, that those who go to heaven shall never go from thence again into a worse place; and also those that go to hell, and would come out, they shall not come out from thence again. And, friend, this is such a gulf, so fixed by him that cannot lie, that thou wilt find it so which way soever thou goest, whether it be to heaven or hell. Here therefore thou seest how secure God will make those who die in the faith: God will keep them in heaven; but those that die in their sins, God will throw them to hell, and keep them there; so that they that would go from heaven to hell, cannot, neither can they come from hell that would go to heaven. Mark, he doth not say, they would not: for O how fain would these who have lost their souls for a lust, for two-pence, for a jug of ale, for a strumpet, for this world, come out of that hot scalding fiery furnace of God's eternal vengeance, if they might; but here is their misery, they that would come from you to us, that is, from hell to heaven, cannot, they must not, they shall not; they cannot; God hath decreed it, and is resolved the contrary: Here therefore lies the misery, not so much as they are in hell, but there they must lie for ever and ever. Therefore if thy heart would at any time tempt thee to sin against God, cry out, No, for then I must go to hell, and lie there for ever. If the drunkards, swearers, liars, and hypocrites, did but take this doctrine soundly down, it would make them tremble when they think of sinning. But poor souls, now they will make a mock of sin, Prov. 14. 9. and play with it as a child doth play with a rattle; but the time is coming, that these rattles that now they play with, will make such a noise in their ears and consciences, that they shall find, that if all the devils in hell were yelling at their heels, the noise would not be comparable to it, Numb. 32. 23, Friend, thy sins, as so

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many blood-hounds, will first hunt thee out, and then take thee and bind thee, and hold thee down for ever, Prov. 5. 22. They will gripe thee and gnaw thee as if thou had a nest of poisonous serpents in thy bowels, Job 20. 24. and this will not be for a time, but, as I have said, for ever, for ever, for ever.

Ver. 27. Then he said, I pray thee therefore, father, that thou wouldst send him to my father's house:

THE verse before, I told you, were spoken partly to hold forth a desire that the damned have to be freed of their endless misery. Now this verse still holds forth the cries of those poor souls very vehement; they would very fain have something granted to them, but it will not be; as will more clearly appear afterward.

Then he said, I pray thee therefore, father, &c. As if he should say, Seeing I have brought myself into such a miserable condition, that God will not regard me, that my exceeding loud and bitter cries will not be heard for myself; seeing I must not be admitted to have so much as one drop of cold water, nor the least help from the poorest saints:

And seeing, besides all this, here my soul must lie to all eternity, broiling and frying; seeing I must, whether I will or no, undergo the hand of eternal vengeance, and the rebukes of devouring fire; seeing my state is such, that I would not wish a dog in my condition; *Send him to my father's house.* It is worthy to be taken notice of (again) who it is he desired to be sent, namely, Lazarus. O friend, see here now the stout hearts and stomachs of poor creatures will be humbled, (as I said before), they will be so brought down, that those things that they disdained and made light of in this world, they would be glad of in the life to come. He who by this man was so slighted, as that he thought it a dishonour that he should eat with the dogs of his flock; what, shall I regard Lazarus, scrubbed, beggarly Lazarus? what, shall I so far dishonour my fair, sumptuous, and gay house, with such a scabbed creep-hedge as he? No, I

scorn he should be entertained under my roof. Thus in his lifetime, while he was in his bravery; but now he is come into another world, now he is parted from his pleasures, now he sees his fine house, his dainty dishes, his rich neighbours and companions and he are parted asunder; now he finds, instead of pleasures, torments; instead of joys, heaviness; instead of heaven, hell; instead of the pleasures of sin, the horror and guilt of sin: O now send Lazarus!

Lazarus, it may be, might have done him some good, if he might have been entertained in time past, and might have persuaded him at least not to have gone on so grievously wicked; but he slights him, will not regard him, he is resolved to disown him, though he lose his own soul for so doing. Ay, but now send Lazarus, if not to me, to my father's house, and let him tell them, from me, That if they run on in sin, as I have done, they must and shall receive the same wages that I have received.

Take notice of this, you that are despisers of the least of the Lazaruses of our Lord Jesus Christ; it may be now you are loth to receive these little ones of his, because they are not gentlemen; because they cannot, with Pontius Pilate, speak Hebrew, Greek, and Latin. Nay, they must not, shall not speak to them, to admonish them; and all because of this.

Though now the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ may be preached to them freely, and for nothing; nay, they are now desired to hear and receive it; though now they will not own, regard, and embrace these Christian proffers of the glorious truth of Jesus, because they come out of some of the basest earthen vessels, 1 Cor. 1. 26.; yet the time is coming, when they will both sing and cry, Send him to my father's house. I say, remember this, ye that despise the day of small things; the time is coming when you would be glad if you might enjoy from God, from Christ, or his saints, one small drop of cold water, though now you are unwilling to receive the glorious distilling drops of the gospel of our Lord Jesus.

Again, see here the lamentable state they are in,

that go to hell from their fathers, mothers, sisters, brothers, &c. While they are in this world, men delight to set their children ill examples; and also children love to follow the wicked steps of their ungodly parents. But when they depart this life, and drop down into hell, and find themselves in irrecoverable misery, then they cry, Send some body to my father's house, to my brother's house. Tell them my state is miserable, tell them I am undone for ever; and tell them also, that if they will be walking in these ungodly steps wherein I left them, they will assuredly fall into this place of torments.

I pray thee send him to my father's house. Ah friends and neighbours, it is like you little think of this, that some of your friends and relations are crying out in hell, Lord, send some body to my father's house, to preach the gospel to them, lest they also come into these torments.

Here, men while they live, can willingly walk together in the way of sin; and when they are parted by death, they that are living seldom or never consider of the sad condition that they that are dead are descended into. But ye ungodly fathers, how are your ungodly children roaring now in hell? and your ungodly parents that lived and died ungodly, now in the pains of hell also? And one drunkard is singing on the ale-house bench, and another roaring under the wrath of God, saying, O that I was with him, how would I rebuke him, and persuade him by all means to leave off these evil courses. O! that they did but consider what I now suffer for pride, covetousness, drunkenness, lying, swearing, stealing, whoring, and the like. O! did they but feel the thousandth part thereof, it would make them look about them, and not buy sin at so dear a rate as I have done; even with the loss of my precious soul.

Send him to my father's house. Not to my father, but to my father's house. It may be there are ungodly children, there are ungodly servants, wallowing in their ungodliness; send him therefore to my father's house. It is like, they are still the same that I left them;

them; I left them wicked, and they are wicked still; I left them slighers of the gospel, saints, and ways of God, and they do it still: *Send him to my father's house*; it is like there is but a little between them and the place where I am; send him to-day, before to-morrow, *lest they come into the same place of torment. I pray thee thou wouldst send him.* I beg it on my bended knee, with crying and with tears, in the agony of my soul. It may be, they will not consider, if thou do not send him, I left them sottish enough, hardened as well as I; they have the same devil to tempt them, the same lusts and world to overcome them: *I pray thee therefore that thou wouldst send him to my father's house*; make no delay, lest they lose their souls, lest they come hither: if they do, they are like never to return again. O! little do they think, how easily they may lose their souls; they are apt to think their condition to be as good as the best, as I once through ignorance did; but send him, send him without delay, *lest they come into this place of torment.* O! that thou wouldst give him commission; do thou send him thyself; the time was, when I, together with them, slighted those that were sent of God; though we could not deny but that he spake the word of God, and was sent of him, as our conscience told us; yet we preferred the calls of men before the calls of God: for though they had the one, yet because they had not the other in that antichristian way which we thought meet, we could not, would not, either hear him ourselves, nor yet give consent that others should. But now a call from God is worth all. *Do (thou) therefore send him to my father's house.*

The time was when we did not like it, except it might be preached in the synagogue; we thought it a low thing to preach and pray together in houses; we were too high-spirited, too superstitious; the gospel would not down with us, unless we had it in such a place, by such a man; no, nor then neither effectually. But now, Oh! that I was to live in the world again, and might have that privilege, to have some acquaint-

acquaintance with blessed Lazarus, some familiarity with that holy man, what attendance would I give unto his wholesome words? How would I affect his doctrine, and close in with it? How would I square my life thereby? Now, therefore, as it is better to hear the gospel under a hedge, than to sit roaring in a tavern, it is better to welcome God's begging Lazaruses, than the wicked companions of this world. It is better to receive a saint in the name of a saint, *a disciple in the name of a disciple*, Luke 10. 16. than to do as I have done. O! it is better to receive a child of God, that can by experience deliver the things of God, his free love, his tender grace, his rich forbearance, and also the misery of man, if without it, than to be *daubed up with untempered mortar*, Ezek. 13. O! I may curse the day that ever I gave way to the flatteries, and fawning of a company of carnal men; but this my repentance is too late; I should have looked about me sooner, if I would have been saved from this woful place. Therefore send him, not only in the town I lived in, and unto some of my acquaintance, but to my father's house.

In my lifetime, I did not care to hear that word that cut me most, and shewed me mine estate aright.

I was vexed to hear my sins mentioned, and laid to my charge; I loved him best that deceived me most, that said, *Peace, peace, when there was no such thing*, Jer. 5. 30, 31. But now, O that I had been soundly told of it! O that it had pierced both mine ears and heart, and had stuck so fast, that nothing could have cured me, saving the blood of Christ! It is better to be dealt plainly with, than that we should be deceived; they had better see their lost condition in the world, than stay while they be damned, as I have done: Therefore send Lazarus, send him to my father's house. Let him go and say, I saw your son, your brother, in hell, weeping and wailing, and gnashing his teeth: Let him bear them down in it, and tell them plainly, it is so, and that they shall see their everlasting misery, if they have not a special care. Send him to my father's house.

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Ver. 28. *For I have five brethren; that he may testify unto them, lest they also come into this place of torment.*

THese words are (if I may so say) a reason given by those in hell, why they are restless and do cry so loud, it is that their companions might be delivered from those intolerable torments, which they must and shall undergo, if they fall short of everlasting life by Jesus Christ. *Send him to my father's house; for I have five brethren, &c.* Though while they lived among them in the world, they were not so sensible of their ruin, yet now they are passed out of the world, and do partake of that which before they were warned of; they can, I say, then cry out, now I find that to be true indeed, which was once and again told, and declared to me, that it would certainly come to pass.

For I have five brethren. Here you may see that there may be, and are whole households in a damnable state and condition, as our Lord Jesus doth by this signify. Send him to my father's house, for they are all in one state; I left all my brethren in a pitiful case. People while they live here, cannot endure to hear that they should be all in a miserable condition; but when they are under the wrath of God, they see it, they know it, and are very sure of it: for they themselves, when they were in the world, lived as they do, but they fell short of heaven; and therefore if they go on, so shall they. Oh therefore send quickly to my father's house, for all the house is in an undone condition, and must be damned if they continue so.

The thing observable is this, namely, That those that are in hell, do not desire that their companions should come thither; nay, rather, saith he, Send him to my father's house, and let him testify to them that are therein, lest they also come, &c.

Quest. But some may say, What should be the reason, that the damned should desire not to have their companions come into the same condition that they

they are fallen into; but rather that they might be kept from it, and escape that dreadful state?

Ans. I do believe there is scarce so much love in any of the damned in hell, as really to desire the salvation of any. But in that there is any desire in them that are damned, that their friends and relations should not come into that place of torment, it appears to me, to be rather for their own ease, than for their neighbours good; for let me tell you, this I do believe, that it will aggravate the grief and horror of them, to see their ungodly neighbours in the like destruction with them. For where the ungodly do live and die, and descend into the pit together, the one is rather a vexation to the other, than any thing else. And it must needs be so, because there are no ungodly people that do live ungodly together, but they do learn ill examples one of another, as thus; if there live one in the town that is very expert and cunning for the world, why now the rest that are of the same mind with him, they will labour to imitate and follow his steps; this is commonly seen.

Again, If there be one given to drunkenness, others of the town, through his means, run the more into that sin with him, and do accustom themselves the more unto it, because of his enticing them, and also by setting such an ill example before them. And so, if there be any addicted to pride, and must needs be in all the newest fashions, how do their example provoke others to love and follow the same vanity! Spending that upon their lusts, which should relieve their own and others wants. Also, if there be any given to jesting, scoffing, lying, whoring, backbiting, junketing, wantonness, or any other sin; they that are most expert in these things, do oft-times intangle others, that peradventure would not have been so vile as now they are, had they not had such an example; and hence they are called corrupters, Isa. 1. 4.

Now these will by their doings exceedingly aggravate the condemnation of one another. He that did set his neighbour an ill example, and thereby caused him

him to walk in sin, he will be found one cause of his friend's destruction, insomuch that he will have to answer for his own sin, and for a great part of his neighbour's too, which will add to his destruction; as the scripture in Ezekiel sheweth, where, speaking of the watchman that should give the people warning, if he do not, though the man did die in his sins, *yet his blood shall be required at the watchman's hand.*

So here let me tell thee that if thou shouldst be such an one, as by thy conversation and practices shall be a trap and a stumbling-block to cause thy neighbour to fall into eternal ruin; though he be damned for his own sin; yet God may, nay he will charge thee as being guilty of his blood, in that thou didst not content thyself to keep from heaven thyself, but didst also by thy filthy conversation keep away others and cause them to fall with thee. O! therefore, will not this aggravate thy torment? Yea, if thou shouldst die and go to hell before thy neighbours or companions, besides the guilt of thine own sins, thou wouldst be so loaden with the fear of the damnation of others to be laid to thy charge, that thou wouldst cry out, O send one from the dead to this companion, and that companion with whom I had society in my life-time, for I see my cursed carriage will be one cause of his condemnation, if he fall short of glory!

I left him living in foul and heinous offences; but I was one of the first instruments to bring him to them. Oh! I shall be guilty both of my own and his damnation too! O that he might be kept out hence, lest my torment be aggravated by his coming hither.

For where ungodly people do dwell together, they being a snare and stumbling-block one to another by their practice, they must be a torment one to another and an aggravation of each other's damnation. O cursed be thy face, faith one, that ever I set mine eyes on thee; it was long of thee; I may thank thee; it was thee that did entice me, and ensnare me; it was your filthy conversation that was a stumbling-block to me; it was your covetousness, it was your pride, your haunting the ale-house, your gaming and
X whoring;

whoring; it was long of you that I fell short of life; if you had set me a good example as you set me an ill one, it may be I might have done better than now I do; but I learned of you, I followed your steps: I took counsel of you. O that I had never seen your face! O that thou had never been born to do my soul this wrong, as you have done! O! faith the other, and I may as much blame you, for do you not remember how at such a time, and at such a time, you drew me out; and drew me away, and asked me if I would go with you, when I was going about other business, about my calling; but you called me away, you sent for me, you are as much in the fault as I; though I were covetous, you were proud; and if you learned covetousness of me, I learned pride and drunkenness of you. Though I learned you to cheat, you learned me to whore, to lie, to scoff at goodness. Though I, base wretch, did stumble you in some things, you did as much stumble me in others. I can blame you as you blame me; and if I have to answer for some of your most filthy actions, you have to answer for some of mine. I would you had not come hither; the very looks of you do wound my soul, by bringing my sins afresh into my mind, the time when, the manner how, the place where, the persons with whom: It was with you, you! Grief to my soul! Since I could not shun thy company there, O that I had been without thy company here!

I say therefore, for those that have sinned together, to go to hell together, it will very much perplex and torment them both; therefore I judge this one reason. why they that are in hell do desire, that their friends or companions do not come thither into the same place of torment that they are in. And therefore where Christ saith, that the damned souls cry out, Send to our companions, that they may be warned and commanded to look to themselves. O send to my five brethren! it is because they would not have their own torments heightened by their company; and a sense, yea, a continual sense of their
sins,

sins, which they caused them to commit when they were in the world with them. For I do believe, that the very looks of those that have been beguiled of their fellows, I say, their very looks will be a torment to them; for thereby will the remembrance of their own sins be kept (if possible) the fresher on their consciences, which they committed with them; and also they will wonderfully have the guilt of the other sins upon them, in that they were partly the cause of his committing them, being instruments in the hands of the devil, to draw them in too. And therefore, lest this come to pass, *I pray thee, send him to my father's house.* For if they might not come hither, peradventure my torment might have some mitigation; that is, If they might be saved, then their sins will be pardoned, and not so heavily charged on my soul. But if they do fall into the same place where I am, the sins that I have caused them to commit, will ly so heavy, not only on their soul, but also on mine, that they sink me into eternal misery, deeper and deeper. *O therefore send him to my father's house, to my five brethren, and let him testify to them, lest they come into this place of torment.*

These words being thus understood, what a condition doth it shew them to be in then, that now much delight in being the very ringleaders of their companions into sins of all sorts whatsoever!

While men live here, if they can be counted the cunningest in cheating, the boldest for lying, the archest for whoring, subtillest for coveting, and getting the world; if they can but cunningly defraud, undermine, cross, and anger their neighbours, yea, and hinder them from the means of grace, the gospel of Christ; they glory in it, take a pride in it, and think themselves pretty well at ease, and their minds are somewhat quiet, being beguiled with sin.

But, friends, when thou hast lost this life, and dost begin to lift up thine eyes in hell, and seest what thy sins have brought thee to; and not only so, but that thou by thy filthy sins didst cause others

(devil-like) to fall into the same condemnation with thee; and that one of the reasons of their damnation was this, that thou didst lead them to the commission of those wicked practices of this world, and the lusts thereof; then, Oh that some body would stop them from coming, lest they also come into this place of torment, and be damned as I am! how will it torment me! Balaam could not be contented to be damned himself, but also he must by his wickedness cause others to stumble and fall. The Scribes and Pharisees could not be content to keep out of heaven themselves, but they must labour to keep out others too. Therefore theirs is the greater damnation.

The deceived cannot be content to be deceived himself; but he must labour to deceive others also. The drunkard cannot be content to go to hell for his sins, but he must labour to cause others to fall into the same furnace with him. But look to yourselves, for here will be damnation upon damnation, damned for thy own sins, and damned for thy being partaker with others in their sins; and damned for being guilty of the damnation of others. O how will the drunkards cry, for leading their neighbours into drunkenness! How will the covetous person howl for setting his neighbour, his friend, his brother, his children and relations, so wicked an example! by which he hath not only wronged his own soul, but also the souls of others. The liar, by lying, learned others to lie; the swearer learned others to swear; the whoremonger learned others to whore.

Now all these, with others of the like sort, will be guilty, not only of their own damnation, but of others. I tell you, that some men have so much been the authors of the damnation of others, that I am ready to think that the damnation of them will trouble them as much as their own damnation. Some men (it is to be feared) at the day of judgement, will be found to be the authors of destroying whole nations. How many souls, do you think, Balaam with his deceit, will have to answer for? How many Mahomet? How many the Pharisees, that hired the

soldiers

soldiers to say the disciples stole away Jesus? Matth. 28. 11,—16; and by that means stumbled their brethren to this day; and was one means of binding them from believing the things of God and Jesus Christ, and so the cause of the damnation of their brethren to this very day.

How many poor souls hath Bonner to answer for, think you? and several filthy blind priests? How many souls have they been the means of destroying by their ignorance and corrupt doctrine? Preaching, that was no better for their souls than ratsbane to the body, for filthy lucre's sake. They shall see that they, many of them, it is to be feared, will have whole towns to answer for, whole cities to answer for. Ah, friend, I tell thee, thou that hast taken in hand to preach to the people, it may be thou hast taken in hand thou canst not tell what. Will it not grieve thee, to see thy whole parish come bellowing after thee to hell, crying out, This we may thank thee for; this is long of thee; thou didst not teach us the truth; thou didst lead us away with fables; thou wast afraid to tell us of our sins, lest we should not put meat fast enough into thy mouth. O cursed wretch, that ever thou shouldst beguile us thus, deceive us thus, flatter us thus! We would have gone out to hear the word abroad, but that thou didst reprove us, and also tells us, that that which we see now is the way of God was hearsay, and a deceivable doctrine; and wast not contented (blind guide as thou wert) to fall into the ditch thyself, but hast also led us thither with thee.

I say, look to thyself, lest thou cry out when it is too late, Send Lazarus to my people, my friends, my children, my congregation to whom I preached, and beguiled through my folly. Send him to the town in which I did preach last, lest I be the cause of their damnation. Send him to my friends from whence I came, lest I be made to answer for their souls and mine own too, Ezek. 33. 1,—6.

O send him, therefore, and let him tell them, and testify unto them, lest they also come into this place

place of torment. Consider ye that live thus in the world, while ye are in the land of the living, lest you fall into this condition. Set the case, thou shouldst by thy carriage destroy but a soul, but one poor soul, by one of thy carriages or actions, by thy sinful works; consider it now, I say, lest thou be forced to cry, *I pray thee therefore that thou wouldst send him to my father's house, for I have five brethren, that he may testify unto them, lest they also come in to this place of torment.*

If so, then I shall not only say to the blind guides, Look you to yourselves, and shut not out others; No, but this doth reach unto all those that do not only keep souls from heaven by preaching, and the like, but speaks forth the doom of those that shall any ways be instrumental to hinder others from closing in with Jesus Christ. O what red lines will those be against all those rich ungodly landlords, that so kept under their poor tenants, that they dare not go out to hear the word, for fear their rent should be raised, or they turned out of their houses! What sayst thou, landlord? Will it not cut thy soul when thou shalt see that thou couldst not be content to miss of heaven thyself, but thou must labour to hinder others also? Will it not give thee an eternal wound in thy heart, both at death and judgement, to be accused of the ruin of thy neighbour's soul, thy servant's soul, thy wife's soul, together with the ruin of thy own? Think on this, you drunken, proud, rich, and scornful landlords, think on this, mad-brained blasphemous husbands, that are against the godly and chaste conversation of your wives; also you that hold your servants so hard to it, that you will not spare them time to hear the word, unless it be when and when your lusts will let you. If you love your own souls, your tenants souls, your wives souls, your servants souls, your childrens souls; if you would not cry, if you would not howl, if you would not bear the burden of the ruin of others for ever; then beseech you consider this doleful story, and labour to avoid the soul-killing torment that this poor wretch

groaned

groaneth under, when he saith, *I pray thee therefore that thou wouldst send him to my father's house.*

For I have five brethren, that he may testify, mark, that he may testify, unto them, lest they come into this place of torment.

These words have still something more in them than I have yet observed from them; there are one or two things more that I shall briefly touch upon; and therefore mark, he saith, *That he may testify unto them, &c.* Mark, I pray you, and take notice of the word *testify*. He doth not say, And let him go unto them, or speak with, or tell them such and such things: No, but let him testify, or affirm it constantly, in case any should oppose it. *Let him testify unto them.* It is the same word the scripture uses to set forth the vehemency of Christ his telling of his disciples of him that should betray him. *And he testified, saying, One of you shall betray me. And he testified;* that is, he spake it so as to dash or overcome any that should have said, It shall not be. It is a word that signifies, that in case any should oppose the thing spoken of, yet that the party speaking should still continue constant in his saying. *And he commanded them to preach, and to testify, that it is he that was ordained of God to be the judge of quick and dead.* To testify, mark, that is, to be constant, irresistible, undaunted, in case it should be opposed and objected against. So here, let him testify to them, lest they come into this place of torment.

From whence observe, That it is not an easy matter to persuade them who are in their sins alive in this world, that they must and shall be damned, if they turn not, and be converted to God. *Let him testify to them;* let him speak confidently, tho' they frown upon him, or dislike his way of speaking. And how is this truth verified and cleared by the carriage of almost all men now in the world toward them that do preach the gospel; and shew their own miserable state plainly to them, if they close not with it! If a man do but indeed labour to convince sinners of their sins, and lost condition by nature, though they must

must be damned if they live and die in that condition, O how angry are they at it! Look how he judges, say they; Hark how he condemns us; he tells us we must be damned if we live and die in this state: We are offended at him, we cannot abide to hear him, or any such as he; we will believe none of them all, but go on in the way we are a-going. *Forbear, why shouldst thou be smitten?* said the ungodly king to the prophet, when he told him of his sins, 2 Chron. 25. 15, 16.

I say, tell the drunkard he must be damned if he leaves not his drunkenness, the swearer, liar, cheater, thief, covetous, railers, or any ungodly persons, they must and shall lie in hell for it, if they die in this condition; they will not believe you, nor credit you.

Again, Tell others that there are many in hell that have lived and died in their conditions, and so are they like to be, if they convert not to Jesus Christ, and be found in him, or that there are others that are more civil and sober men, who (although we know that their civility will not save them) if we do but tell them plainly of the emptiness and unprofitableness of that, as to the saving of their souls, and that God will not accept them, nor love them, notwithstanding these things, and that if they intend to be saved, they must be better provided than with such righteousness as this; they will either fling away, and come to hear no more, or else if they do come, they will bring such prejudice with them in their hearts, *That the word preached shall not profit them, it being mixed not with faith, but with prejudice in them that hear it*, Heb. 4. 1, 2. Nay, they will some of them be so full of anger, that they will break out and call even those that speak the truth heretics; yea, and kill them, Luke 4. 25, 26, 27, 28, 29. And why so? Because they tell them, that if they live in their sins, that will damn them; yet if they turn and live a righteous life, according to the holy and just, and good law of God, that will not save them. Yea, because we tell them plainly, that unless they leave their sins and unrighteousness too, and close in
with

with a naked Jesus Christ, his blood and merits, and what he hath done, and is now doing for sinners, they cannot be saved; and unless they do eat the flesh of the Son, of man, and drink his blood, they have no life abiding in them, they gravel presently, and are offended at it, (as the Jews were with Christ for speaking the same thing to them, John 4. 53. 60.) and fling away themselves, their souls and all, by quarrelling against the doctrine of the Son of God, as indeed they do, though they will not believe they do; and therefore he that is a preacher of the word had need, not only tell them, but testify to them, again and again, that their sins, if they continue in them, will damn them, and damn them again. And tell them again, their living honestly according to the law, their paying every one their own, their living quietly with their neighbours, their giving to the poor their notion of the gospel, and saying, they do believe in Christ, will do them no good at the general day of judgement. Ha friends! how many of you are there at this very day that have been told once and again of your lost undone condition, because you want the right, real, and saving work of God upon your souls? I say, hath not this been told you, yea, testified unto you from time to time, that your state is miserable, that yet you are never the better, but do still stand where you did; some in an open ungodly life, and some drowned in a self-conceited holiness of Christianity? Therefore, for God's sake, if you love your souls, consider, and beg of God for Jesus Christ's sake, that he would work such a work of grace in your hearts, and give you such a faith in his Son Jesus Christ, that you may not only have rest here, as you think, not only think your state safe while you live here, as you may be safe indeed, not only here, but also when you are gone, lest you do cry in the anguish and perplexity of your souls, Send one to my companions that have been beguiled by Satan, as I have been, and so by going on, come into this place of torment, as I have done.

Again, one thing more is to be observed from these

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words,

words, *Let him testify to them, lest they come into this place of torment.*

Mark, lest they come in, as if he had said, or else they will come into this place of torment, as sure as I am here. From whence observe, That though some souls do for sin fall into the bottomless pit of hell before their fellows, because they depart this world before them; yet the other abiding in the same course, are as sure to go to the same place, as if they were there already. How so? Because that all are condemned together, they have all fallen under the same law, and have all offended the same justice, and must for certain, if they die in that condition, drink as deep, if not deeper, of the same destruction. Mark I pray you what the scripture says, *He that believeth not, is condemned already,* John 3. 18.

He is condemned as well as they, having broken the same law with them. If so, then what hinders, but they will partake of the same destruction with them? only the one hath not the law yet so executed upon them, because they are here; the other have had the law executed upon them, they are gone to drink that which they have been brewing, and thou art brewing that in this life, which thou must certainly drink. The same law, I say, is in force against you both, only he is executed, and thou art not. Just as if there were a company of prisoners at the bar, and all condemned to die: What, because they are not all executed in one day, therefore shall they not be executed at all? Yes, the same law that executed its severity upon the parties now deceased, will for certain be executed upon them that are alive, in its appointed time. Even so it is here, we are all condemned by nature, if we close not in with the grace of God by Jesus Christ, we must and shall be destroyed with the same destruction, *and therefore send him, saith he, lest, mark, lest they come into this place of torment.*

Again, *Send him to my father's house, and let him testify to them, lest they come into this place of torment.* As if he had said, It may be he may prevail with

with them, it may be he may win upon them, and so they may be kept from hence, from coming into this grievous place of torment. Observe again, That there is a possibility of obtaining mercy, if now, I say, now in this day of grace we turn from our sins to Jesus Christ; yea, it is more than possible. And therefore for thy encouragement, do thou know for certain, that if thou shalt in this thy day accept of mercy upon God's own terms, and close with him effectually, God hath promised, yea, made many promises, that thy soul shall be conducted safe to glory, and shall for certain escape all the evils that I have told thee of; ay, and many more than I can imagine. Do but search the scriptures, and see how full of consolation they are to a poor soul that is minded to close in with Jesus Christ. *He that cometh to me, saith Christ, I will in no wise cast out.* Though he be an old sinner, *I will in no wise cast him out; mark, in no wise,* though he be a great sinner. *I will in no wise cast him out,* if he comes unto me. Though he has slighted me never so many times, and not regarded the welfare of his own soul, yet let him now come to me, and notwithstanding this, *I will in no wise cast him out,* nor throw away his soul, John 4. 37. Again, saith the apostle, *Now mark now is the accepted time, now is the day of their salvation.* Now here is mercy in good store, now God's heart is open to sinners; now he will make you welcome; now he will receive any body if they do but come to Christ. *He that comes to me saith Christ, I will in no wise cast out.* And why? *Because now is the accepted time, now is the day of salvation,* 1 Cor. 6. 2, 3. As if the apostle had said, If you will have mercy, have it now, receive it now, close in with it now.

God hath a certain day to hold out his grace to sinners: now is the time, now is the day. It is true there is a day of damnation, but this is a day of salvation. There is a day coming, wherein sinners must cry to the mountains to fall on them, to the hills to cover them from the wrath of God; but now, now is the day in which he doth hold out his grace. There

is a day coming, in which you will not be admitted to have the privilege of one drop of water, to cool your tongue, if now, I say, if now you slight his grace and goodness which he holds out to you. Ah, friends, consider there are now hopes of mercy, but then there will not; now Christ holds forth mercy unto you, but then he will not, Matth. 7. 23. Now there are his servants that do beseech you to accept of his grace, but if thou lose the opportunity that is put into thine hand, thou thyself mayest beseech hereafter, and no mercy be given thee. *And he cried and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue, and there was none given.* Therefore let it never be said of thee, as it will be said of some, *Why is there a price put into the hand of a fool, seeing he hath no heart to it; seeing he hath no heart to make a good use of it?* Prov. 17. 16. Consider therefore with thyself, and say, It is better going to heaven than hell; it is better to be saved than damned; it is better to be with saints than with damned souls; and to go to God is better than to go to the devil.

Therefore *seek the Lord while he may be found, and call upon him while he is near,* Isa. 55. 6. lest in thy trouble he leave thee to thyself, and say unto thee plainly, *Where I am, thither ye cannot come.*

O! if they that are in hell might but now again have one such invitation as this, how would they leap for joy! I have thought sometimes, should God send but one of his ministers to the damned in hell, and give him commission to preach the free love of God in Christ extended to him, and held out to them, if now while it is proffered to them they will accept of his kindness; O how welcome would they make this news, and close in with it on any terms!

Certainly they would say, We will accept of grace on any terms in the world, and thank you too, though it cost life and limbs to boot; we will spare no cost nor charge, if mercy may be had. But poor souls, while they live here, they will not part from sin,
with

The groans of a damned soul.

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with hell-bred devilish sin: no, they will rather lose their souls than lose their filthy sins.

But, friend, thou wilt change thy note before it be long, and cry, O simple wretch that I am, that I should damn my soul by sin!

It is true, I have had the gospel preached to me, and have been invited in: I have been preached to, and have been warned of this; but *how have I hated instruction, and mine heart despised reproof! I have not obeyed the voice of my teachers, nor inclined mine ear to them that instructed me*, Prov. 5. 10, 11. O therefore, I say, poor soul! is there hope? Then lay thine hand upon thy mouth, and kiss the dust, and close in with the Lord Jesus Christ, and make much of his glorious mercy; and invite also thy companions to close in with the same Lord Jesus Christ, lest one of you do go to hell before-hand, and expect with grief of heart your companions to come after; and, in the mean time, with anguish of heart, do sigh and say,

O send him to my companions, and let him testify to them, lest they also come into this place of torment.

Now then, from what hath been said, there might many things be spoken by way of use and application; but I shall be very brief, and but touch some things, and so wind up.

And, first, I shall begin with the sad condition of those that die out of Christ, and speak something to that.

Secondly, To the latter end of the parable, which more evidently concerns the scripture, and speak somewhat to that.

1. Therefore you see, that the first part of the parable contains a sad declaration of the state of one living and dying out of Christ; how that they lose heaven for hell, God for the devil, light for darkness, joy for sorrow.

2. How that they have not so much as the least comfort from God, who, in the time they live here below, neglect coming to him for mercy; not so much as one drop of cold water.

3. That such souls will repent of their folly, when
repentance

repentance will do them no good, or when they shall be past recovery.

4. That all the comfort such souls are like to have, they have it in this world.

5. That all their groanings and sighs will not move God to mitigate in the least his heavy hand of vengeance that is upon them, for the transgressions they have committed against him.

6. That their sad state is irrecoverable, or they must never (mark) never come out of that condition.

7. Their desires will not be heard for their ungodly neighbours.

From these things then, I pray you consider the state of those that die out of Christ Jesus; yea, I say, consider their miserable state; and think thus with thyself; Well, if I neglect coming to Christ, I must go to the devil, and he will not neglect to fetch me away into those intolerable torments.

Think thus with thyself: What! shall I lose a long heaven for short pleasure? shall I buy the pleasures of this world at so dear a rate, as to lose my soul for the obtaining of that? shall I content myself with a heaven that will last no longer than my lifetime? What advantage will these be to me, when the Lord shall separate soul and body asunder, and send one to the grave, the other to hell, and at the judgement-day, the final sentence of eternal ruin must be passed upon me?

1. Consider, That the profits, pleasures, and vanities of this world will not last for ever, but the time is coming, yea, just at the doors, when they will give thee the slip, and leave thee in the fuds, and in the brambles of all that thou hast done.

2. And therefore, to prevent this thy dismal state, think thus with thyself: It is true, I love my sins, my lusts and pleasures; but what good will they do me at the day of death and of judgement? Will my sins do me good then? Will they be able to help me when I come to fetch my last breath? What good will my profits do me? And what good will my vanities do, when death says he will have no nay?

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What good will all my companions, fellow-jeeters, jeerers, liars, drunkards, and all my wantons do me? Will they help to ease the pains of hell? Will these help to turn the hand of God from inflicting his fierce anger upon me? Nay, will they not rather cause God to shew me no mercy, to give me no comfort, but rather to thrust me down in the hottest place of hell, where I may swim in fire and brimstone.

3. Consider thus with thyself; would I be glad to have all, every one of my sins, to come in against me, to inflame the justice of God against me? Would I be glad to be bound up in them, as the three children were bound in their cloaths, and to be as really thrown into the fiery furnace of the wrath of almighty God, as they were into Nebuchadnezzar's fiery furnace?

4. Consider thus; would I be glad to have all, and every one of the ten commandments, to discharge themselves against my soul? The first saying, Damn him, for he hath broken me; the second saying, damn him, for he hath broken me, &c.

Consider how terrible this will be, yea more terrible than if thou shouldst have ten of the biggest pieces of ordinance in England to be discharged against thy body, thunder, thunder, one after another! nay, this would not be comparable to the reports that the law (for the breach thereof) will give against thy soul; for those can but kill the body, but these will kill both body and soul; and that not for an hour, a day, a month, or a year, but they will condemn thee for ever.

Mark, it is for ever, for ever. It is into everlasting damnation, eternal destruction, eternal wrath and displeasure from God, eternal gnawings of conscience, eternal continuance with devils.

O consider, it may be the thought of seeing the devil doth now make thine hair to stand right up on thine head! O but this, to be damned, to be among all the devils, and that not only for a time, as I said before, but for ever, to all eternity!

This is wonderfully miserable, ever miserable; that
no

no tongue of man, no nor of angels, is able to express it.

5. Consider much with thyself, not only my sins against the law will be laid to my charge, but also the sins I have committed in slighting the gospel, the glorious gospel: these also must come with a voice against me. As thus, Nay, he is worthy to be damned, for he rejected the gospel, he slighted the free grace of God tendered in the gospel. How many times wast thou (damned wretch) invited, intreated, beseeched, to come to Christ, to accept of mercy, that thou mightest have heaven, thy sins pardoned, thy soul saved, thy body and soul glorified, and all this for nothing but the acceptance, and through faith forsaking thoseimps of Satan, which by their embracements have drawn thee down toward the gulf of God's eternal displeasure?

How often didst thou read the promises, yea the free promises of the common salvation? How oft didst thou read the sweet counsels and admonitions of the gospel, to accept of the grace of God? But thou wouldst not, thou regardest it not, thou didst slight all.

Secondly, As I would have thee to consider the sad and woful state of those that die out of Christ, and are past all recovery, so would I have thee consider the many mercies and privileges thou enjoyest above some (peradventure) of thy companions that are departed to their proper place.

As, 1. Consider thou hast still the thread of thy life lengthened, which for thy sins might seven years ago, or more, have been cut asunder, and thou have dropped down among the flames.

2. Consider the terms of reconciliation by faith in Christ are still proffered unto thee, and thou invited, yea intreated to accept of them.

3. Consider the terms of reconciliation are but (bear with me though I say but) only to believe in Jesus Christ, with faith that purifies the heart, and enables thy soul to feed on him effectually, and be saved from this sad state.

4. Consider

4. Consider the time of thy departure is at hand, and the time is uncertain, and also that for ought thou knowest, the day of grace may be past to thee before thou diest, not lasting so long as the uncertain life in this world. And if so, then know for certain, that thou art as sure to be damned, as if thou wast in hell already, if thou convert not in the mean while.

5. Consider it may be some of thy friends are giving all diligence to make their calling and election sure, being resolved for heaven, and thou thyself endeavourest as fast to make sure of hell, as if resolved to have it; and together with this, consider how it will grieve thee, that while thou wast making sure of hell, thy friends were making sure of heaven. But more of this by and by.

6. Consider what a sad reflection this will have on thy soul, to see thy friends in heaven, and thyself in hell; thy father in heaven, and thou in hell; thy mother in heaven, and thou in hell; thy brother, thy sister, thy children, in heaven, and thou in hell. As Christ said to the Jews of their relations according to the flesh, so may I say to thee concerning thy friends, *There shall be weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth*, when you shall see your fathers and mothers, brethren and sisters, husbands and wives, children and kinsfolk, with your friends and neighbours, in the kingdom of heaven, and thou thyself thrust out, Luke 13. 27, 28, 29.

But again, because I would not only tell thee of the damnable state of those that die out of Christ, but also persuade thee to take hold of life, and go to heaven, take notice of these following things.

1. Consider, that whatever thou canst do, as to thy acceptance with God, is not worth the dirt of thy shoes, but is all as menstruous rags, Isa. 64. 6.

2. Consider, that all the conditions of the new covenant (as to salvation) are and have been completely fulfilled by the Lord Jesus Christ, and that for sinners.

3. Consider, that the Lord calls to thee for to receive

ceive whatsoever Christ hath done, and that on free cost, Rev. 22. 17.

4. Consider, that thou canst not honour God more, than to close in with his proffers of grace, mercy, and pardon of sin, Rom. 4.

Again, that which will add to all the rest, thou shalt have the very mercy of God, the blood of Christ, the preachers of the word, together with every sermon, all the promises, invitations, exhortations, and all the counsels and threatenings of the blessed word of God; thou shalt have all thy thoughts, words, and actions, together with all thy food, thy raiment, thy sleep, thy goods, and also all hours, days, weeks, months, and years, together with whatsoever else God hath given thee; I say thy abuse of all these shall come up in judgement against thy soul; for God will reckon with thee for every thing, whether it be good or bad, Eccl. 12. 14.

5. Nay, further, it is so unreasonable a thing for a sinner to refuse the gospel, that the very devils themselves will come in against thee, as well as Sodom, that damned crew. May not they, I say, come in against thee, and say, O thou simple man! O vile wretch! that had not so much care of thy soul, thy precious soul, as the beast hath of its young, or the dog of the very bone that lieth before him? Was thy soul worth so much, and didst thou so little regard it? Were the thunder-claps of the law so terrible, and didst thou so slight them? Besides, was the gospel so freely, so frequently, so fully tendered to thee, and yet hast thou rejected all these things?

Hast thou valued sin at a higher rate than thy soul? than God, Christ, angels, saints, and communion with them in eternal blessedness and glory? Wast thou not told of hell-fire, those intolerable flames? Didst thou never hear of those intolerable roarings of the damned ones that are therein? Didst thou never hear or read that doleful saying in the 16th of Luke, how the sinful man cries out among the flames, *One drop of water to cool my tongue?* Thus, I say, may

may the very devils, being ready to go with thee into the burning furnace of fire and brimstone, though not for sins of so high a nature as thine, trembling say, O that Christ had died for devils, as he died for man! And, O that the gospel had been preached to us, as it hath been to thee! How would we have laboured to have closed in with it! But wo be to us, for we might never have it proffered; no, not in the least, though we would have been glad of it. But you, you have it proffered, preached, and proclaimed unto you, Prov. 8. 4. Besides, you have been intreated, and beseeched to accept of it, but you would not. O simple fools! that might have escaped wrath, vengeance, hell-fire, and that to all eternity, and had no heart at all to do it.

6. May not the messengers of Jesus Christ also come in with a shrill and terrible note against thy soul, when thou standest at the bar of God's justice, saying, Nay, thou ungodly one, how often hast thou been forewarned of this day? Did not we sound an alarm in thine ears, by the trumpet of God's word, day after day? How often didst thou hear us tell thee of these things! Did we not tell thee, sin would damn thy soul? Did we not tell thee, that without conversion there was no salvation? did we not tell thee, that they who loved their sins, should be damned at this dark and gloomy day (as thou art like to be)? Yea, did we not tell thee, that God out of his love to sinners, sent Christ to die for them, that they might (by coming to him) be saved? Did we not tell thee of these things? Did we not run, ride, labour, and strive abundantly (if it might have been) for the good of thy soul, (tho' now a damned soul)? Did we not venture our goods, our names, our lives? Yea, did we not even kill ourselves with our earnest intreaties of thee to consider of thine estate, and by Christ to escape this dreadful day? O sad doom! When thou shalt be forced, full sore against thy will, to fall under the truth of this judgement, saying, *O how have I hated instruction, and how hath my heart despised reproof!* (for indeed) *I have not obeyed the voice of my teachers, nor inclined mine*

ear to them that instructed me, Prov. 5. 11,—13.

7. May not thy father, thy mother, thy brother, thy sister, thy friend, &c. appear with gladness against thee at the terrible day? saying, O thou silly wretch, how rightly hath God met with thee! O how righteously doth his sentence pass upon thee! Remember thou wouldst not be ruled, nor persuaded in thy lifetime. As thou didst not care for us and our admonitions then, so neither do we care for thy ruin, terror, and damnation now. No, but we will stand on God's side, in sentencing of thee to that portion which the devils must be partakers of. *The righteous shall rejoice when he seeth the vengeance; he shall wash his foot in the blood of the wicked,* Psal. 5. 8, 10. O sad! It is enough to make mountains tremble, and rocks rend in pieces, to hear this doleful sound. Consider these things; and if thou wouldst be loth to be in this condition, then have a care of living in sin now. How loth wilt thou be to be thrust away from the gates of heaven! and how loth wilt thou be to be deprived of the mercy of God!

How unwilling wilt thou set foot forward towards the lake of fire! Never did malefactor so unwillingly turn off the ladder, when the halter was about his neck, as thou wilt turn from God to the devil, from heaven to hell, when the sentence is passed upon thy soul.

O how wilt thou sigh and groan! How willingly wouldst thou hide thyself, and run away from justice! But alas! as it is with them that are on the ladder ready to be executed, so it will be with thee. They would fain run away; but there are many halbert-men to stay them; and so the angels of God will beset thee round, I say round on every side; so that thou mayst indeed look, but run thou canst not. Thou mayst wish thyself under some rock or mountain, Rev. 6. 15, 16. but how to get under, thou knowest not.

O how unwilling wilt thou be to let thy father go to heaven without thee! thy mother or friends, &c. go to heaven without thee! How willingly wouldst thou hang on them, and not let them go! O father! cannot you help me? Mother, cannot you do me some good?

good? O how loth am I to burn and fry in hell, while you are singing in heaven! But alas! the father, mother, or friends, reject them, slight them, and turn their backs upon them, saying, You would have none of heaven in your lifetime, therefore you shall have none of it now; you slighted our counsels then, and we slight your tears, cries, and condition now. What sayst thou, sinner? will not this persuade thine heart, or make thee bethink thyself? This is now before thou fall into that dreadful place, that fiery furnace. But O consider how dreadful the place itself, the devils themselves, the fire itself will be! And this at the end of all, here thou must lie for ever! here thou must fry for ever and for ever! This will be more to thee than any man with tongue can express, or with pen can write. There is none that can, I say, by the ten thousand part, discover the state and condition of such a soul.

I shall conclude this then with a few considerations of encouragement.

1. Consider (for I would fain have thee come in sinner) that there is a way made by Jesus Christ for them that are under the curse of God, to come to this comfortable and blessed state of Lazarus I was speaking of. See Ephes. ch. 2.

2. Consider what pains Christ Jesus took for the ransoming of thy soul from all the curses, thunder-claps, and tempests of the law; from all the intolerable flames of hell; from that soul-sinking apperance of thy person (on the left hand) before the judgement-seat of Christ Jesus, from everlasting fellowship, with innumerable companies of yelling, and soul-amazing devils; I say, consider what pains the Lord Jesus Christ took in bringing in redemption for sinners, from these things.

In that, *Though he was rich, yet he became poor, that thou, through his poverty, might be made rich,* 2 Cor. 8. 9. He laid aside his glory, John 7. and became a servant, Phil. 2. He left the company of angels, and encountered with the devil, Luke 4. Mat. 4. He left heaven's ease for a time, to lie upon hard mountains, John 8. In a word, he became poorer than those that go with flail and rake; yea, than the very birds

or

or foxes, and all to do thee good. Besides, consider a little of these unspeakable and intolerable slightings and rejections, and the manifold abuses that came from men upon them: How he was falsely accused, being a sweet, harmless, and undefiled lamb; how he was undervalued, so that a murderer was counted less worthy of condemnation than he. Besides, how they mock him, spit on him, beat him over the head with staves, and the hair plucked from his cheeks. *I gave my back to the smiters* (saith he) *and my cheeks to them that plucked off the hair; I hid not my face from shame and spitting.* His head crowned with thorns, his hands pierced with nails, and his side with a spear; together with how they used him, scourged him, and so miserably misusing him, that they had even spent him in a great measure before they did crucify him; insomuch that there was another sain to carry his cross,

Again, not only this, but lay to heart a little what he received from God his dear Father, though he was his dear and tender Son. First, in that he did deal with him as the greatest sinner and rebel in the world; for he laid the sins of thousands, and ten thousands, and thousands of thousands of sinners to his charge, Isa. 53. and caused him to drink the terrible cup that was due to them all; and not only so, but did delight in so doing: *For it pleased the Lord to bruise him.* God dealt indeed with his Son, as Abraham would have dealt with Isaac; ay, and more terrible by ten thousand parts; for he did not only tear his body like a lion, but made his soul an offering for sin. And this was not done feignedly, but really, (for justice called for it, he standing in the room of sinners), witness that horrible and unspeakable agony that fell on him suddenly in the garden, as if all the vials of God's unspeakable scalding vengeance had been cast upon him all at once, and all the devils in hell had broken loose from thence at once to destroy him, and that for ever; insomuch that the very pangs of death seized upon him in the same hour. For, saith he, *My soul is exceeding sorrowful and amazed, even unto death,* Mark 14. 33, 34.

Witness

Witness also that strange kind of sweat that trickled down his most blessed face, where it is said, and he sweat, as it were great drops or clodders of blood, trickling down to the ground. O Lord Jesus! what a load didst thou carry! what a burden didst thou bear of the sins of the world, and the wrath of God! O thou that didst not only bleed at nose and mouth, with the pressure that lay upon thee, but thou wast so pressed, so loaden, that the pure blood gushed through the flesh and skin, and so ran trickling down to the ground! *And his sweat was as it were great drops of blood, trickling or falling down to the ground,* Luke 22. 44. Canst thou read this, O thou wicked sinner, and yet go on in sin? Canst thou think of this, and defer repentance one hour longer? O heart of flint, yea, harder! O miserable wretch! what place in hell will be hot enough for thee, to have thy soul put into, if thou shalt persist or go on still to add iniquity to iniquity?

Besides, his soul went down to hell, Psal. 16. 10.; Acts 2. 31. and his body to the bars of the grave: and had hell, death, or the grave, been strong enough to hold him, then he had suffered the vengeance of eternal fire to all eternity. But, O Blessed Jesus! how didst thou discover thy love to man in thy thus suffering! and, O God the Father! how didst thou also declare the purity and exactness of thy justice, in that, though it was thine only, holy, innocent, harmless, and undefiled Son Jesus, that did take on him our nature, and represent our persons, answering for our sins, instead of ourselves, thou didst so wonderfully pour out thy wrath upon him, to the making of him cry out, *My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?* And, O Lord Jesus! what a glorious conquest hast thou made over the enemies of our souls, even wrath, sin, death, hell, and devils, in that thou didst wring thyself from under the power of them all! and not only so, but hast led them captive which would have led us captive; and also hast received for us that glorious and unspeakable inheritance, *that eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath it entered*

ed into the heart of man to conceive; and also hath given them some discovery thereof through thy Spirit.

And now, sinner, together with this, consider,

Fourthly, That though Jesus Christ hath done all these things for sinners, yet the devils make it their whole work, and continual study, how they may keep thee and others from enjoying of these blessed privileges that have been thus obtained for sinners by this sweet Jesus. He labours, I say,

1. To keep thee ignorant of thy state by nature,
2. To harden thy heart against the ways of God,
3. To inflame thy heart with love to sin and the ways of darkness.

And, 4. To get thee to continue herein. For that is the way, he knows, to get thee to be a partaker with him of flaming hell-fire, even the same that he himself is fallen into, together with the rest of the wicked world, by reason of sin. Look to it therefore.

But now, in the next place, a word of encouragement to you that are the saints of the Lord.

1. Consider what a happy state thou art in, that hast gotten the faith of the Lord Jesus into thy soul. (But be sure thou have it) I say, how safe, how sure, how happy art thou! For when others go to hell, thou must go to heaven; when others go to the devil, thou must go to God; when as others go to prison, thou must be set at liberty, at ease, and at freedom; when others must roar for sorrow of heart, then thou shalt also sing for the joy of heart.

2. Consider thou must have all thy well-spent life to follow thee, instead of all thy sins, and the glorious blessings of the gospel, instead of the dreadful curses and condemnations of the law; the blessing of the Father, instead of a fiery sentence from the Judge.

3. Let dissolution come when it will, it can do thee no harm; for it will be but only a passage out of a prison into a palace; out of a sea of troubles into an haven of rest; out of a croud of enemies, to an innumerable company of true, loving, and faithful friends; out of shame, reproach, and contempt, in-

to exceeding great and eternal glory. For death shall not hurt thee with his sting, nor bite thee with his foul-mudering teeth, but shall be a welcome guest to thee, even to thy soul, in that it is sent to free thee from thy troubles which thou art in whilst here in this world, dwelling in the tabernacle of clay.

4. Consider, however it goes with friends and relations, yet it will go well with thee, Eccles. 8. 12.

However it goes with the wicked, yet I know; mark, Yet I know (saith he) that it shall go well with them that fear the Lord, that fear before him.

And therefore let this, in the first place, cause thee chearfully to exercise thy patience under all the calamities, crosses, troubles and afflictions that may come upon thee; and by patient continuance in well-doing, to commit both thyself, and thine affairs and actions, into the hands of God, through Jesus Christ, as to a faithful creator, who is true to his word, and loveth to give unto thee whatsoever he hath promised to thee.

And therefore to encourage thee, while thou art here, with comfort to hold on for all thy crosses in this thy journey, be much in considering the place that thou must go into, so soon as dissolution comes.

It must be into heaven, to God the judge of all, to an innumerable company of angels, to the spirits of just men made perfect, to the general assembly and church of the first born, whose names are written in heaven, and to Jesus (to the redeemer) who is the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaks better things for thee than Abel's did for Cain, Heb. 11. 22, 23, 24.

Consider, that when the time of the dead that they shall be raised is come, then shall thy body be raised out of the grave and be glorified, and be made like to Jesus Christ, Phil. 3. 21. O excellent condition.

When Jesus Christ shall sit on the throne of his glory, you shall also sit with him, even when he shall sit on the throne of his glory. O will not this be glorious, that when thousands, and thousands of thousands shall be arraigned before the judgement-

seat of Christ, then for them to sit with him upon the throne, together with him to pass the sentence upon the ungodly? 1 Cor. 6. 2, 3. Will it not be glorious to enjoy those things that eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath entered into the heart of man to conceive?

Will it not be glorious to have this sentence, *Com ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you before the foundation of the world?* Will it not be glorious to enter then with the angels and saints into that glorious kingdom? Will it not be glorious for thee to be in glory with them, while others are in unutterable torments? O then! how will it comfort thee to see thou hast not lost that glory; to think that the devil hath not got thy soul, that thy soul should be saved, and that not from a little, but a great exceeding danger; not with a little, but a great salvation. O therefore let the saints be joyful in glory, let them triumph over all their enemies. Let them begin to sing heaven upon earth, triumph before they come to glory, even when they are in the midst of their enemies, *For this honour shall all his saints have*, Psal. 149. 6, 7, 8, 9.

Ver. 29. *Abraham said unto him, they have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them.*

IN the verses foregoing you see there is a discovery of the lamentable state of the poor soul that dies out of Christ, and the special favour of God; and also, how little the glorious God of heaven doth regard, and take notice of their most miserable condition.

Now in this verse he doth magnify the words which were spoken to the people by the prophets and apostles, *They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them.* As if he should say, thou askest me, that I should send Lazarus back again into the world to preach to them that live there, that they might escape that doleful place that thou art in: What needs that? have they not Moses and the prophets? have they not had my ministers and servants sent unto them, and coming as from me? I sent Enoch and Noah,

Noah, Moses and Samuel; I sent David, Hsaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Daniel, Hosea, and the rest of the prophets, together with Peter, Paul, John, Matthew, James, Jude, with the rest; *Let them hear them.* What they have spoken by divine inspiration I will own, whether it be for the damnation of those that reject, or the saving of them that receive their doctrine. And therefore, what need have they that one should be sent unto them in another way? *They have Moses and the prophets, let them hear them,* let them receive their word, close in with the doctrine declared by them. I shall not at this time speak any thing to that word *Abraham*, having touched upon it already; but shall tell you what is to be understood by these words, *They have Moses and the prophets, let them hear them.* The things that I shall observe from hence, are these, 1. That the scriptures spoken by the holy men of God, are a sufficient rule to instruct to salvation them that do assuredly believe and close in with what they hold forth. *They have Moses and the prophets, let them hear them.* That is, if they would escape that doleful place, and be saved indeed from the intolerable pains of hell fire, as they desire; they have that which is sufficient to counsel them, *They have Moses and the prophets;* let them be instructed by them, *Let them hear them,* 2 Tim. 3. 16, 17. *For all scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness; Why? That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished to every good work.*

Do but mark these words, *All scripture is profitable: All;* take it where you will, and what place you will; *All is profitable:* For what? *That the man of God,* or he that is bound for heaven, would instruct others in their progress thither.

It is profitable to instruct him, in case he be ignorant; to reprove him, in case he transgress; to correct him, if he hath need of it; to confirm him, if he be wavering. It is profitable for doctrine; and all this in a very righteous way, that the poor soul may

not only be helped, but thoroughly furnished, not only to some, but to all good works. And when Paul would counsel Timothy to stick close to the things that are sound and sure, presently he puts him upon the scripture, saying, *Thou hast from a child known the scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation, through faith which is in Christ Jesus.* The scripture holds forth God's mind and will, of his love and mercy towards man, and also the creature's carriage towards him from first to last; so, if thou wouldst know the love of God in Christ to sinners, *Then search the scriptures, for they are they that testify of him.*

Wouldst thou know what thou art, and what is in thine heart? Then search the scriptures, and see what is written in them, Rom. 3. from 9,—18; chap. 1. 29, 30, 31.; Jer. 17. 9.; Gen. 6. 5.; chap. 8. 21.; Eph. 4. 18. with many others. The scriptures, I say, they are able to give a man perfect instruction into any of the things of God, necessary to faith and godliness, if he hath but an honest heart, seriously to weigh and ponder the several things contained in them. As to instance in things more particular for the further clearing up of this: And first, if we come to the creation of the world:

Wouldst thou know somewhat concerning that? then read Gen. 1. and 2. chapters, and compare them with Psalm 33. at the 6th verse; also Isa. 66. 2.; Prov. 8. towards the end.

Wouldst thou know whether he made them of something or nothing? read Heb. 11. 3.

Wouldst thou know whether he put forth any labour in making them, as we do in making things. read Psal. 33. 2.

If thou wouldst know whether man was made by God corrupt or upright, read Eccles. 7. 26.; Gen. 1. 10. 18, 25, 31.

Wouldst thou know whether God did place man after he had made him? read Gen. 2. 15.

Wouldst thou know whether that man did live there all his time or not? then read Gen. 3. 23, 24.

If thou would know whether man be still in that state

state by nature, that God did place him in; then read Eccles. 7. 26. and compare it with Rom. 5. 16. and Eph. 2. 1, 2, 3. *God made man upright, but he hath sought out many inventions.*

If thou wouldst know whether man was first beguiled, or the woman that God made an help mate for him; read Gen. 3. 6. and compare it with 1 Tim. 2. 14.

Wouldst thou know whether God looked upon Adam's eating the forbidden tree, to be sin or no? read Rom. 5. 12, 13, 14, 15. and compare it with Gen. 3. 17.

Wouldst thou know whether it were the devil who beguiled them, or whether it was a natural serpent, such as do haunt the desolate places? read Gen. 3. 12. with Rev. 20. 1, 2, 3.

Wouldst thou know whether that sin be imputed to us? read Rom. 5. 12, 13, 14, 15. and compare it with Eph. 2. 2.

Wouldst thou know whether man was cursed for his sin? read Gal. 3. 10.; Rom. 5. 15.

Wouldst thou know whether the curse did fall on man, or on the whole creation with him? compare Gen. 3. 7. with Rom. 8. 20, 21, 22.

Wouldst thou know whether a man be defiled in every part of him by the sin he hath committed? then read Isa. 1. 6.

Wouldst thou know man's inclination so soon as he is born? read Psal. 58. 3. *The wicked are estranged from the womb, they go astray so soon as they be born.*

Wouldst thou know whether man once fallen from God by transgression, can recover himself, by all he can do? then read Rom. 3. 20, 23.

Wouldst thou know whether it be the desire of the heart of man by nature, to follow God in his own way or no? compare Gen. 6. 5. and Gen. 8. 21. with Hos. 11. 7.

Wouldst thou know how God's heart stood affected towards man before the world began? compare Eph. 1. 4. with 2 Tim. 1. 9.

Wouldst thou know whether sin were sufficient to draw

draw God's love from his creatures? compare Jer. 3. 7. and Mic. 7. 18. with Rom. 5. 6, 7, 8.

Wouldst thou know whether God's love did still abide towards his creatures for any thing they could do to make him amends? then read Deut. 11. 5, 6, 7, 8.

Wouldst thou know how God could still love his creatures, and do his justice no wrong? read Rom. 3. 24, 25, 26. *Being justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, whom God hath sent forth to be a propitiation for sin, through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God. To declare, I say, at this time his righteousness, that he might be just, and the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus.*

That is, God having his justice satisfied in the blood, and righteousness, and death of his own Son Jesus Christ for the sins of poor sinners, he can now save them that come to him, though never so great sinners, and do his justice no wrong, because it hath had a full and complete satisfaction given it by that blood, 1 John 2. 7, 8.

Wouldst thou know who he was, and what he was, that did out of his love die for sinners? then compare John 3. 16, 17.; Rom. 5. 8. with Isa. 9. 6.

Wouldst thou know whether this Saviour had a body of flesh and bones, before the world was, or took it from the Virgin Mary? then read Gal. 4. 4.

Wouldst thou know whether he did in that body bear all our sins, and where? then read 1 Pet. 2. 4. *Who bore our sins in his own body on the tree.*

Wouldst thou know whether he did rise again after he was crucified, with the very same body? then read Luke 24. at ver. 38, 39, 40, 41.

Wouldst thou know whether he did eat or drink with his disciples after he rose out of the grave? then read Luke 24. 42. and Acts 10. 41.

If thou wouldst be persuaded of the truth of this, that that very body is now above the clouds and stars, read Acts 1. 9, 10, 11. and Luke 24. to the end.

If thou wouldst know that the Quakers hold an error,

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error, that say the body of Christ is within them; consider the same scripture.

Wouldst thou know what that Christ that died for sinners is doing in that place whither he is gone? then read Heb. 7. 24.

Wouldst thou know who shall have life by him, read 1 Tim. 1. 14, 15. and Rom. 5. 6, 7, 8. which say, Christ died for sinners, for the ungodly.

Wouldst thou know whether they that live and die in their sins, shall go to heaven or not? then read 1 Cor. 6. 10.; Rev. 21. 8, 27. which saith, *They shall have their part in the lake that burns with fire and brimstone.*

Wouldst thou know whether man's obedience will obtain that Christ should die for them, or save them? then read Mark 2. 17.; Rom. 5. 7.

Wouldst thou know whether righteousness, justification, and sanctification do come through the virtue of Christ's blood, compare Rom. 5. 9. with Heb. 12. 12.

Wouldst thou know whether a natural man abstain from the outward act of sin against the law, merely by a principle of nature? then compare well Rom. 2. 14. with Phil. 3. 6.

Wouldst thou know whether a man by nature may know something of the invisible things of God? compare seriously Rom. 1. 20, 21. with Rom. 2. 14, 15.

Wouldst thou know how far a man may go in a profession of the gospel, and yet fall away? then read Heb. 6. 4, 5, 6. *They may taste the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come; they may taste the heavenly gift, and be partakers of the Holy Ghost, and yet so fall as never to be recovered, or renewed again unto repentance: See also Luke 13.*

Wouldst thou know how hard it is to go to heaven? read Matth. 7. 13, 14.; Luke 13. 24.

Wouldst thou know whether a man by nature be a friend to God, or an enemy? then read Rom. 5. 11.; Col. 1. 21.

Wouldst thou know what, or who they are that shall go to heaven; then read John 3. 3, 5, 7. and 2 Cor. 5. 7. Also wouldst thou know what a sad thing

thing it is for any to turn their backs upon the gospel of Jesus Christ? then read Heb. 10. 28, 29. and Mark 16. 16.

Wouldst thou know what is the wages of sin? then read Rom. 6. 23.

Wouldst thou know whither those do go, that die unconverted to the faith of Christ? then read Psal. 9. 17. and Isa. 14. 9.

Reader, here might I spend many sheets of paper, yea, I might upon this subject write a very great book; but I shall now forbear, desiring thee to be very conversant in the scriptures, *for they are they that will testify of Jesus Christ*, John 5. 39. The Bereans were counted noble upon this account: *These were nobler than those of Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind; and searched the scriptures daily, &c.* Acts 17. 11. But here let me give thee one caution, that is, have a care that thou do not satisfy thyself with a bare search of them, without a real application of him whom they testify of to thy soul, lest instead of faring better for thy doing this work, thou dost fare a great deal worse, and thy condemnation be very much heightened, in that though thou didst read so often the sad state of those that die in sin, and the glorious estate of them that close in with Christ, yet thou thyself shouldst be such a fool as to lose Jesus Christ, notwithstanding thy hearing and reading so plentifully of him.

They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them.

As if he should say, what need have they that one should be sent to them from the dead? Have they not Moses and the prophets? Hath not Moses told them the danger of living in sin? Deut. 27. 15,—26.; chap. 28. 15,—21. &c. in the end of the chapter; also chap. 29. 18,—22. Hath he not there told them, what a sad state those persons are in, that deceive themselves with the deceit of their hearts, saying, *They shall have peace though they follow their sins*, in these words: *And when he heareth the words* of

of this curse, he bleſſeth himſelf in his heart, ſaying, I ſhall have peace though I go on, or walk in the imagination of my heart, to add drunkenneſs to thirſt. The Lord will not ſpare that man, but then the anger of the Lord, and his jealouſy ſhall ſmoke againſt him, and all the curſes that are written in this book ſhall lie upon him: and the Lord ſhall blot out his name from under heaven.

Again, did not Moſes write of the Saviour that was to come afterwards into the world? Deut. 18. 18.; nay, have not all the prophets from Samuel, with all thoſe that follow after, prophesied, and foretold theſe things? Therefore what need have they that I ſhould work ſuch a miracle, as to ſend one from the dead unto them? *They have Moſes and the prophets; let them hear them.*

From whence obſerve again, that God doth honour the writings of Moſes and the prophets, as much, nay more, than if one ſhould riſe from the dead: *Should not a people ſeek unto their God? What! ſeek for the living among the dead? To the law, and to the teſtimony, (ſaith God), if they ſpeak not according to this word, it is becauſe there is no light in them, Iſa. 8. 19, 20.* And let me tell you plainly, I do believe that the devil knows this full well, which makes him labour to beget in the hearts of his diſciples and followers, light thoughts of them; and doth perſuade them, that even a motion from their own beguiled conſcience, or from his own wicked ſpirit, is to be obſerved and obeyed before them. When the very apoſtle of Jeſus Chriſt, though he heard a voice from the Excellent Glory, ſaying, *This is my beloved Son, &c.* Yet writing to the churches, he commends the writing of the prophets before it, ſaying, *We have alſo a more ſure word of the prophets, unto which ye do well to take heed, 2 Pet. 1. 17, 18, 19.* Now if thou doubtſt whether in that place be meant the ſcriptures, the words of the prophets or no; read but the next verſe, where he addeth for a certain confirmation thereof theſe words: *Knowing this firſt, that there is no prophecy of the ſcriptures, of any*

private interpretation: For prophecy came not in old time by the will of man, but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.

And therefore what a sad thing is it for those that go about to disown the scriptures? I tell you however they may flight them now, yet when they come into hell, they will see their folly: *They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them.*

Further, Who are they that are so tossed to and fro, with the several winds of doctrine that have been broached in these days, but such for the most part, as have had a light esteem of the scriptures? for the ground of error (as Christ saith) is because they know not them, Mark 12. 24. And indeed, it is just with God to give them over to follow their own dark blinded consciences, to be led into errors, that they might be damned in hell, who did not believe that the things contained in the scripture were the truth, that they might be saved and go to heaven, I cannot well tell how to have done speaking for, and on the scriptures side; only this I consider, A word is enough to the wise; and therefore I shall commit these things into the hands of them that are of God; and as for the rest, I shall say to them, Rather than God will save them from hell with the breach of his holy word, if they had a thousand souls a-piece, God would destroy them all; *for the scriptures cannot be broken, John 10. 35.*

Ver. 30. *And he said, Nay, father Abraham: but if one went unto them from the dead, they will repent.*

THE verse before, you know, as I told you, it was part of an answer to such as lose their souls; so it is a vindication of the scriptures of Moses and the prophets, *They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them.*

Now this verse is an answer to what was said in the former; and such an one as hath in it a rejection of the former answer. *Nay, Father Abraham, Nay,* saith he, do not say so, do not put them off with this; *send one from the dead,* and then there will be some

some hopes. It is true, thou speakest of the scripture, of Moses and the prophets, and sayest, *let them hear them*; but these things are not so well as I could wish; I had rather thou would send one from the dead. In these words therefore, *Nay, Father Abraham*, there is a repulse given, nay, let it not be so. Nay, I do not like of that answer: Hear Moses and the prophets; nay. The same expression is used by Christ, Luke 13. 4, 5. *Think you that they upon whom the tower of Siloam fell, were sinners above others? I tell you nay: for except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish.* So here, *Nay, Father Abraham, &c.* By this word, *Nay*, therefore, is signified a rejecting the first answer.

Now observe, I pray you, the reason why he says *Nay*, is, because God doth put over all those that would be saved, to observe and receive the truth contained in scripture, and believe that. To have a high esteem of them, and to love and search them, as Christ saith, *Search the scriptures,—for they are they which testify of me*, John 5. 39. But the damned say, *Nay*; as if he had said, This is the thing: to be short, my brethren are unbelievers, and do not regard the word of God: I know it by myself; for when I was in the world, it was so with me; many a good sermon did I hear; many a time was I admonished, desired, intreated, beseeched, threatened, forewarned, of what I now suffer; but, alas! I was ignorant, self-conceited, surly, obstinate, and rebellious. Many a time the preachers told me, hell would be my portion, the devil would wreck his malice on me; God would pour on me his sore displeasure; but he had as good have preached to the stock, to the post, to the stones I trod on; his words rang in mine ears, but I kept them from mine heart. I remember he alledged many a scripture, but those I valued not: the scriptures, thought I, what are they? A dead letter, a little ink and paper, of three or four shillings price. Alas! What is the scripture? Give me a ballad, a news-book, George on horseback, or Bevis of Southampton. Give me some book that

2 B 2 teaches

teaches curious arts, that tells of old fables; but for the holy scriptures I cared not. And as it was with me then, so it is with my brethren now; we were all in one spirit, loved all the same sins, slighted all the same counsels, promises, encouragements, and threatenings, of the scripture; and they are still, as I left them, still in unbelief, still provoking God, and rejecting good counsel; so hardened in their ways, so bent to follow sin, that let the scriptures be shewed to them daily, let the messengers of Christ preach till their hearts ake, till they fall down dead with preaching, they will rather trample it under foot, and swine-like rend them, than close in with those gentle and blessed proffers of the gospel.

Nay, Father Abraham; but if one should rise from the dead, they would repent. Though they have Moses and the prophets, (the scriptures), they will not repent and close in with Jesus Christ, though the scriptures do witness against them. If therefore there be any good done to them, they must have it another way. I think, saith he, it would work much on them, *if one should rise from the dead.* And this truth indeed is so evident, that ungodly ones have a light esteem of the scriptures, that it needs not many strong arguments to prove it, being so evidently manifested by their every day's practice, both in words and actions, almost in all things they say and do. Yet for the satisfaction of the reader, I shall shew you, by a scripture or two, (though I might shew many), that this was and is true, with the generality of the world. See the words of Nehemiah in his 9th chapter concerning the children of Israel, who, though the Lord offered them mercy upon mercy, as it is from ver. 19. to ver. 25. yet, ver. 26. saith he, *Nevertheless they were disobedient for all thy goodness towards them, and rebelled against thee, (but how?) and cast thy law behind their back: Slew the prophets which testified against them, to turn them to thee, and they wrought great provocations.* Observe, 1. They sinned against mercy. And then, 2. They slighted the law, or word of God. 3. They slew the

the prophets that declared it unto them. 4. The Lord counts it a great provocation. See Heb. 3. 10, —19. And see Zach. 7. 11, 12. *But they refused to hearken, (saith he there of the wicked), and pulled away the shoulder, and stopped their ears, that they should not hear the law. Yea, they made their hearts hard as an adamant-stone, lest they should hear the law, and the words which the Lord of hosts sent unto them by his Spirit in the former prophets, &c.* Mark I pray you, here is also,

1. A refusing to hearken to the words of the prophets.

2. That they might so do, they stopped their ears.

3. If any thing was to be done, they pulled away their shoulder.

4. To effect this, they labour to make their hearts as an adamant-stone.

5. And all this, lest they should hear and close in with Jesus, and live, and be delivered from the wrath to come. All which things do hold out an unwillingness to submit to, and embrace the words of God, and so Jesus Christ, which is testified of by them. Many other scriptures I might bring in for confirmation of the thing, as that in Amos 7. 12, 13.; also 2 Sam. 2. 24, 25.; 2 Chron. 25. 15, 16.; Jer. 7. 23, 24, 25, 26, 27.; and chap. 16. 12. Read also seriously that saying in 2 Chron. 36. 15. where he saith, *And the Lord God of their fathers sent unto them by his messengers rising up betimes, because he had compassion on his people, and on his dwelling-place. And did they make them welcome? No; But mocked the messengers of God, and despised his words. And was that all? No; they misused his prophets. How long? Until the wrath of the Lord arose against them: Till there was no remedy.* See also Jer. 29. 19.; chap. 25. 3,—7.; Luke 11. 49.

And besides, the conversion of almost all men doth bear witness to the same, both religious and profane persons; in that they daily neglect, reject, and turn their backs upon the plain testimony of the scriptures.

As, 1. Take the threatenings laid down in holy writ,

writ, and how are they disregarded! There are but a few places in the Bible but there are threatenings against one sinner or other; against drunkards, swearers, liars, proud persons, strumpets, whore-mongers, covetous, railers, extortioners, thieves, lazy persons; in a word, all manner of sins are reprov'd; and without faith in the Lord Jesus, there is a sore punishment to be executed on the committers of them; and all this made mention of in the scriptures.

But for all this, how thick, and by heaps, do these wretches walk up and down our streets? Do but go into the ale-house, and you shall see almost every room besprinkled with them, so foaming out their own shame, that it is enough to make the heart of a saint to tremble, insomuch that they would not be bound to have society with them any long while for all the world. For as the ways of the godly are not liked of by the wicked, even *so the ways of the wicked are an abomination to the just*, Prov. 29. 27.; Psal. 120. 5, 6.

The scriptures say, *Cursed is the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm, and whose heart departeth from the Lord*, Jer. 17. 5.

And yet how many poor souls are there in the world, that stand in so much awe and dread of men, and do so highly esteem their favour, that they will rather venture their souls in the hands of the devil, with their favour, than they will fly to Jesus Christ for the salvation of their souls! Nay, though they be convinced in their souls that the way is the way of God, yet how do they labour to stifle conviction, and turn their ears away from the truth, and all because they will not lose the favour of an opposite neighbour! O I dare not for my master, my brother, my landlord, I shall lose his favour, his house of work, and so decay my calling. O saith another, I would willingly go in this way, but for my father, he chides, and tells me he will not stand my friend when I come to want; I shall never enjoy a pennyworth of his goods; he will disinherite me. And I dare not, saith another, for my husband; for he will be a-railing, and tells me he will turn me

out

out of doors, he will beat me, and cut off my legs. But I tell you, if any of these, or any other things be so prevalent with thee now, as to keep thee from seeking after Christ in his ways, they will also be so prevalent with God against thee, as to make him cast off thy soul, because thou didst rather trust man than God, and delight in the embracing of man rather than in the favour of the Lord.

2. Again, the scripture saith, *He that being often reproved, hardeneth his neck, shall suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy*, Prov. 29. 1.: Yet many are so far from turning, though they have been convinced of their wretched state an hundred times, that when convictions or trouble for sin comes on their consciences, they go on still in the same manner, resisting and choaking the same, though remediless destruction be hard at their heels.

3. Again, thou hast heard say, *Unless a man be born again, he cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven*, John 3. 3. 5, 7. And yet thou goest on in a natural state, an unregenerate condition; nay, thou dost resolve never to turn nor be changed, though hell be appointed on purpose to swallow up such, Isa. 14. 9. Psal. 9. 17. *The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God.*

4. Again, the scripture saith plainly, *That he that loveth and maketh a lie, shall have his part in the lake that burneth with fire and brimstone*, Rev. 21. 8.—27. And yet thou art so far from dreading it, that it is thy delight to jest and jeer, and lie for a penny, or twopence, or sixpence again. And also if thou make the rest of thy companions merry, by telling things that are false of them that are better than thyself, thou dost not care a straw: Or if thou hearest a lie from, or of another, thou wilt tell it, and swear to the truth of it. O miserable!

5. Thou hast heard and read, *That he that believes not, shall be damned*, Mark 16. 16. *And that all men have not faith*, 2 Thes. 3. 2.; and yet thou dost so much disregard these things, that it is like thou didst scarce ever so much as examine seriously whether thou wast

wast in the faith or no; but doth content thyself with the hypocrites hope, which at the last God will cut off, count it no better than the spider's web, Job 8. 13, 14. or the house that is built on the sands, Luke 6. 49. Nay, thou peradventure didst flatter thyself, and thinkest that thy faith is as good as the best of them all; when, alas! poor soul, thou mayst have no saving faith at all; which thou hast not, if thou beest not born again and made a new creature, 2 Cor. 2. 17.

6. Thou hast heard, *That he that neglects God's great salvation, shall never escape his great damnation,* Heb. 2. 3. compared with Luke 14. 24. and Rev. 14. 19, 20. And yet when thou art invited, intreated and beseeched to come in, Luke 14. 17, 18.; 2 Cor. 5. 19, 20.; Rom. 12. 1. thou wilt make any excuse to serve the turn. Nay, thou wilt be so wicked, as to put off Christ time after time, notwithstanding he is so freely proffered to thee: a little ground, a few oxen, a farm, a wife, a twopenny-matter, a play; nay, the fear of a mock, a scoff or a jeer, is of greater weight to draw thee back, than the salvation of thy soul to draw thee forward.

7. And thou hast heard, *That whosoever would be a friend of the world, is the enemy of God,* James 4. 4. But thou regardest not these things, but contrariwise, rather than thou wilt be out of the friendship and favour of this world, thou wilt sin against thine own conscience, and get thyself into favour by fawning and flattering of the world: Yea, rather than thou wilt go without it, thou wilt dissemble, lie, backbite thy neighbour, and an hundred other tricks thou wilt have.

8. You have heard, *That the day of judgement is near, in which you and I, all of us must appear before the tribunal of Jesus Christ, and there be made to give an account to him that is ready to judge the quick and the dead; even of all that ever we did, yea, of all our sins in thought, word, and deed, and shall certainly be damned for them too, if we close not in with our Lord Jesus Christ, and what he hath done and suffered for eternal life; and that not notionally or tra-*
ditionally,

ditionally, but really and savingly, in the power and by the operation of the Spirit, through faith, Eccl. 11. 9, 12; Heb. 9. 27.; Acts 10. 42. & 17. 30, 31.; 2. Cor. 5. 10.; Rev. 20. 12. *And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God, and the books were opened, and another book was opened, which is the book of life, and the dead were judged out of those things that were written in the books.* There is the book of the creatures, the book of conscience, the book of the Lord's remembrance, the book of the law, the book of the Gospel, (Rom. 1. 20. compare with Rom. 2. 12, 15.; Rev. 6. 19.; John 12. 48.) *Then shall he separate them from one another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep on the right hand, and the goats on his left. And shall say to them on his right hand, Come ye blessed; but to the other, Go, or Depart ye cursed,* Mat. 25. 30, 31, 32, 34, 41. Yet, notwithstanding the scriptures do so plainly and plaintively speak of these things, alas! who is there that is weaned from the world, and from their sins and pleasures, to fly the wrath to come? Mat. 3. 7. Notwithstanding the scripture saith also, *That heaven and earth shall pass away, rather than one jot, or one tittle of the word shall fail, till all be fulfilled,* they are so certain, Luke 22. 27.

But leaving the threatenings, let us come to the promises, and speak somewhat of them, and you may see how light men make of them, and how little they set by them, notwithstanding the mouth of the Lord hath spoken **them**.

As, 1. *Turn ye fools, ye scorers, ye simple ones, at my reproof, and behold I will pour out my Spirit unto you,* Prov. 1. 23. And yet persons had rather be in their foolishness and scorning still, and had rather embrace some filthy lust, than the holy, undefiled, and blessed Spirit of Christ, through the promise, though by it as many as receive it are *sealed unto the day of redemption,* Eph. 4. 10. And although he that lives and dies without it is none of Christ's, Rom. 8. 9.

2. God hath said, *If you do but come to him in Christ, though your sins be as red as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; and he will by no means cast thee away,*

(compare Isa. 1. 18. with John 6. 27.); yet poor souls will not come to Christ that they might have life, John 5. 41. but rather, after their hardnefs and impenitent heart, treasure up unto themselves wrath against the day of wrath, and revelation of the righteous judgement of God, Rom. 2. 4, 5, 6.

3. Christ Jesus hath said in the word of truth, That if any man will serve and follow him, *where he is, there shall also his servant be.* John 12. 16.; but yet poor souls chuse rather to follow sin, Satan, and the world, though their companions be devils and damned souls for ever, Mat. 25. 41.

4. He hath also said, *Seek first the kingdom of God, and all other things shall be added.* But let whoso will seek after the kingdom of heaven first for them; for they will take the first time, while time serves to get the things of this life. And if it be so, that they must needs seek after heaven, or else be damned, they must stay till they have more leasure, or till they can better attend to it; or till they have other things handsome about them, or till they are older; when they have little else to do, or when they come to be sick and die. Then Lord have mercy upon them! though it be ten thousand to one but they perish for ever.

For commonly the Lord hath his way to deal with sinners, who put him off when he is striving with them, either to laugh at their calamity, and mock when their fear cometh, Prov. i. 26, 28. or else send them to the gods they have served, which are the devils, Judg. 10. 13, 14. *Go to the gods ye have served, and let them deliver you,* saith he. Compare this with John 8. 44.

5. He hath said, *There is no man that forsaketh father, or mother, wife, children, or lands for his sake and the gospel, but he shall have a hundred fold in this world, with persecutions, and in the world to come life everlasting,* Mark 10. 29, 30.

But men, for the most part, are so far off from believing the certainty of this, they will scarce lose the earning of a penny to hear the word of God, the gospel of salvation. Nay, they will neither go themselves, nor suffer others to go, (if they can help it), with-

out threatening to do them a mischief, if it lie in their way. Nay, further, many are so far from parting from any worldly gain for Christ's sake and the gospel's, that they are still striving by hook and crook, as we say, by swearing, lying, cozening, stealing, covetousness, extortion, oppression, forgery, bribery, flattery, or any other way, to get more, though they get, together with these, death, wrath, damnation, hell, the devil, and all the plagues that God can pour upon them. And if any do not run with them on the same excess of riot, but rather for all their threats, will be so bold and careless (as they call it) as to follow the ways of God; if they can do no more; yet they will whet their tongues like a sword to wound them, and do them the greatest mischief they can, both in speaking against them to neighbours, to wives, to husbands, to landlords, and raising false reports of them. But let such take heed, lest they be in such a state and woeful condition as he was in, who said, in vexation and anguish of soul, *One drop of cold water to cool my tongue.*

Thus might I add many things out of the holy writ, both threatenings and promises, besides those heavenly counsels, loving reproofs, free invitations to all sorts of sinners, both old and young, rich and poor, bond and free, wise and unwise. All which have been, now are, and is to be feared, as long as this world lasts, will be trampled under the feet of those swine, (I call not men), who will continue in the same. But take a review of some of them.

1. Counsel. What heavenly counsel is that where Christ saith, *Buy of me gold tried with fire, that thou mayest be rich, and white raiment that thou mayst be clothed, that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear?* Rev. 3. 17, 18. Also that, *Ho, every one that thirsteth, come to the waters: Yea, come, buy wine and milk, without money, and without price,* Isa. 55. 1.; *Hear and your souls shall live,* ver 5.; *Lay hold of my strength, that you may make peace with me, and you shall make peace with me,* Isa. 27. 5.

2. Instruction. What instruction is here?

Sighs from Hell ; or,

Hear instruction and be wise, and refuse it not. Blessed is the man that heareth me, (saith Christ), watching daily at my gates, waiting at the posts of my doors: For whoso findeth me, findeth life, and shall obtain favour of the Lord, Prov. 8. 32,—36. Take heed that no man deceive you by any means. Labour not for the meat that perisheth, but for that which endureth unto everlasting life, John 9. 31. Strive to enter in to the strait gate, Luke 13. 24. Believe on the Lord Jesus, and thou shalt be saved, Acts 15. 31. Believe not every spirit, but try the spirits. Quench not the Spirit. Lay hold on eternal life. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven, Matth. 5. 16. Take heed and beware of hypocrisy; watch and be sober; learn of me (saith Christ). Come unto me.

3. Forewarning. What forewarning is here?

Because there is wrath, beware; lest he take away with his stroke, then a great ransom cannot deliver thee, Job 36. 18. Be ye not mockers, lest your bands be made strong: for I have heard from the Lord of hosts, a consumption even determined upon the whole earth, Isa. 28. 22. Beware therefore, let that come upon you that is written, Behold, ye despisers, and wonder and perish. For behold I work a work in your days, which ye shall in no wise believe, though a man declare it unto you, Acts 13. 40, 41. Let him that thinketh he standeth, take heed lest he fall, 1 Cor. 16. 12. Watch and pray, lest you enter into temptation, Luke 22. 40, 41. Let us fear, therefore, lest a promise being made, and left us of entering into his rest, any of you should seem to come short of it, Heb. 4. 1. I will therefore put you in remembrance, though you once knew this, how that the Lord having saved the people out of Egypt, afterward destroyed them that believed not, Jude 5. Hold fast that thou hast, let no man take thy crown, Rev. 3. 11.

4. Comfort. What comfort is here?

He that cometh unto me, I will in no wise cast out, John 6. 37. Come unto me all ye that labour, and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest, Matth. 12. 28.

Be of good cheer, thy sins are forgiven thee. I will never leave thee nor forsake thee; (for) I have loved thee with an everlasting love, Jer 13. 3. I lay down my life for my sheep, I lay down my life that they may have life; I am come that they might have life, and that they may have it more abundantly. I have heard thee in a time accepted, and in the day of salvation have I succoured thee; 2 Cor. 6. 2. Though their sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they are as crimson, they shall be as wool. For I have blotted out as a thick cloud thy transgressions, and as a cloud thy sins; return unto me, for I have redeemed thee, Isa. 44. 22.

5. Grief to those that fall short. O sad grief!

How have I hated instruction, and my heart despised reproof, and have not obeyed the voice of my teachers, nor inclined mine ear to them that instructed me? Prov. 7. 11, 12, 16. They shall curse their king and their God, and look upward. And they shall look to the earth, and behold trouble and darkness, and dimness of anguish, and they shall be driven into darkness, Isa. 8. 21, 22. He hath dispersed abroad, he hath given to the poor, his righteousness endureth for ever.—The wicked shall see it and be grieved, he shall gnash his teeth, and melt away; the desire of the wicked shall perish, Psal. 112. 9, 10.

There shall be weeping, when ye shall see Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and all the prophets in the kingdom of heaven, and yourselves thrust out, Luke 13. 26, 27, 28. all which things are slighted by the world.

Thus much in short touching this, That ungodly men undervalue the scriptures, and give no credit to them, when the truth that is contained in them, is held forth in simplicity unto them, but rather cry out, *Nay*, but if one should rise from the dead, then they think something might be done; when alas! though signs and wonders are wrought by the hands of those that preach the gospel, those poor creatures would never the sooner convert, though they suppose they should, as is evident by the carriages of their fore-runners, who, albeit the Lord Jesus Christ himself

self did confirm his doctrine by miracles, as opening blind eyes, casting out of devils, and raising the dead, they were so far from receiving either him or his doctrine, that they put him to death for his pains! Though he had done so many miracles among them; yet they believed not in him, John 12. 27. But to pass this, I shall lay down some of the grounds of their rejecting and undervaluing the scriptures, and so pass on.

1. Because they do not believe that they are the word of God, but rather suppose them to be the inventions of men, written by some politicians, on purpose to make poor ignorant people to submit to some religion and government. Though they do not say this, yet their practices testify the same; as he that when he hears the words of the curse, yet blesteth himself in his heart, and saith he shall have peace, though God saith he shall have none, Deut. 29. 18, 19, 20. And this must needs be, for did but men believe this, that it is the word of God, then they must believe, that he that spake it is true, therefore shall every word and tittle be fulfilled. And if they come once to this, unless they be stark-mad, they will have a care how they do throw themselves under the lash of eternal vengeance. For the reason why the Thessalonians received the word, was, because they believed it was the word of God, and not the word of man, which did effectually work in them by their thus believing, 1 Thess. 2. 13, 14. *When ye received the word which ye heard of us, saith he, ye received it not as the word of man, but (as it is indeed) the word of God, which effectually worketh in you that believe.* So that did a man but receive it in hearing, or reading, or meditating, as it is the word of God, they would be converted. *But the word preached doth not profit, not being mixed with faith in them that hear it,* Heb. 4. 1, 2.

2. Because they do not indeed see themselves by nature heirs of that exceeding wrath and vengeance that the scriptures testify of. For did they but consider what God intends to do with those that live and

die

die in a natural state, it would either sink them into despair, or make them fly for refuge to the hope that is set before them. But if there be never such sins committed, and never so great wrath denounced, and the time of execution be never so near; yet if the party that is guilty be senseless, and altogether ignorant thereof, he will be careless, and regards it nothing at all. And that man by nature is in this condition, it is evident. For take the same man that is senseless, and ignorant of that misery he is in by nature, I say, take him at another time when he is a little awakened, and then you will hear him roar, and cry out so long as trouble is upon him; and a sense of the wrath of God hanging over his head, *Good sirs, what must I do to be saved?*

Though the same man at another time (when his conscience is fallen asleep, and grown hard) will lie like the smith's dog at the foot of the anvil, though the fire sparks fly in his face. But as I said before, when any one is a little awakened, O what work will one verse, one line, nay, one word of the holy scriptures make in his heart! He cannot eat, sleep, work, keep company with his former companions; and all because he is afraid that the damnation spoken of in scripture, will fall to his share; like Balaam, who said, *I cannot go beyond the word of the Lord*, Numb. 22. 18. so long as he had something of the word of the Lord with authority, severity, and power on his heart; but at another time he could teach Balak to *cast a stumbling-block before the children of Israel*.

3. Because the carnal priests do tickle the ears of their hearers with vain philosophy and deceit, and thereby harden their hearts against the simplicity of the gospel and word of God, which things the apostle admonished those that have a mind to close in with Christ to avoid, Col. 2. 8. saying, *Beware lest any man (be he what he will) spoil you, through philosophy and vain deceit, after the traditions of men, and rudiments of the world, and not after Christ*: And you who muzzle up your people in ignorance, with Aristotle, Plato, and the rest of the Heathenish philosophers,

sophers, and preach little, if any thing of Christ rightly; I say unto you, that you will find you have sinned against God, and beguiled your hearers, when God shall in the judgement-day, lay the cause of the damnation of many thousands of souls to your charge, and say, *He will require their blood at your hands.*

Ez:k 33.
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4. Another reason why the carnal unbelieving world do so slight the scriptures, the word of God, is, because the judgement spoken of in the scripture, is not presently executed on the transgressors. *Because sentence against an evil act is not speedily executed, therefore the hearts of the sons of men are wholly set in them to do evil,* Eccles. 8. 11. Because God doth not presently strike the poor wretch as soon as he sins, but waits, and forbears, and is patient, therefore the world judging God to be unfaithful, go to it again and again, and every time grow harder and harder, till at last God is forced either to stretch out his mighty power to turn them, or else send death with the devil and hell to fetch them. *Thou thoughtest*

Psal. 50.
30, 31.

(saith God) *that I was altogether such an one as thyself, but I will reprove thee and set them in order before thy face. Now consider this, ye that forget God, lest I tear you in pieces, and there be none to deliver.*

5. Another reason why the blind world do slight the authority of scripture, is because they give ear to the devil, who through his subtilty casteth false evasions, and corrupt interpretations on them, rendering them not so point-blank the mind of God, and a rule for direction to poor souls, persuading them that they must give ear and way to something else besides, and beyond that: or else he labours to render it vile and contemptible, by persuading them that it is a dead letter, which indeed they know not what they say, nor whereof they affirm. For the scripture it not so dead, but that the knowledge of it is able to make any man wise unto salvation through faith and love, which is in Christ Jesus, 2 Tim. 3. 15; and is profitable for instruction, reproof, and correction in righteousness, that the man of God may be thoroughly furnished to all good works, ver. 17.

And where it is said the letter killeth, he meaneth the law, as it is the ministration of damnation, or a covenant of works; and so indeed it doth kill, and must do so, because it is just, forasmuch as the party that is under the same, is not able to yield to it a complete and continual obedience. But yet I will call Peter and Paul to witness, that the scriptures are of a very glorious concernment, inasmuch as in them is held forth to us the way of life; and also, in that they do administer good ground of hope to us, Rom. 15. 4. *For whatsoever things were written aforetime, were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scripture might have hope.* And again, Rom. 16. 25, 26. *Now to him that is of power to establish you according to my gospel, and the preaching of Jesus Christ; according to the revelation of the mystery which was kept hid since the world began, but now is made manifest, and by the scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandment of the everlasting God, made known to all nations for the obedience of faith.* And therefore whosoever they be that slight the scriptures, they slight that which is no less than the word of God; and that they who slight that, slight him that spake it; and they that do so, let them look to themselves; for God will be revenged on such. Much more might be said to this thing, but I would not be tedious.

A word or two more, so I have done with this. Consider the danger of slighting the words of the prophets or apostles, whether they be correction, reproof, admonition, forewarning, or the blessed invitations and promises contained in them.

1. Such souls do provoke God to anger, and to execute his vengeance on them. *They refused to hearken, they pulled away their shoulders, they stopped their ears, lest they should hear the law, and they made their hearts as an adamant-stone, that they might not hear the law, and the words that were spoken to them by his Spirit in the former prophets: Therefore came a great wrath upon them,* Zech. 7. 11, 12.

2. God will not regard in their calamity. "Because I called, and ye refused, I stretched out my hand

“ and no man regarded; but set at nought all my
 “ counsels, and would have none of my reproof: I
 “ also will laugh at your calamities, and mock when
 “ your fear cometh. When their fear cometh as
 “ desolation, and their destruction like a whirlwind,
 “ then shall they call, but I will not answer; they
 “ shall seek me early, but they shall not find me,
 Prov. 1. 24, 25, 26, 27, 38.

3. God doth commonly give up such men to delusions to believe lies, “ Because they received not the
 “ love of the truth, that they might be saved,
 “ therefore God shall send them strong delusions,
 “ that they should believe a lie, that they all might
 “ be damned.” 2 Thess. 2. 11, 12.

4. In a word, they that do continue to reject and slight the word of God, they are such, for the most part, as are ordained to be damned. Old Eli, his sons not hearkening to the voice of their father, reproving them for their sins, but disobeying his voice, it is said, *It was because the Lord would slay them,* 1 Sam. 2. 15. Again, see in 2 Chron. 25. 15, 16. Amaziah having sinned against the Lord, he sends to him a prophet to reprove him: but Amaziah says, *Forbear wherefore shouldst thou be smitten?* (He did not hearken to the word of God) *Then the prophet forebore, saying, I know that God hath determined to destroy thee, because thou hast not hearkened to my counsel.* Read therefore, and the Lord give thee understanding. For a miserable end will those have that go on in sinning against God, rejecting his word.

Other things might have been observed from this verse, which at this time I shall pass by; partly, because the sum of them hath been touched already, and may be more clearly hinted at in the following verse; and therefore I shall speak a few words to the next verse, and so draw towards a conclusion.

Ver. 31. *And he said unto him, If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one rose from the dead.*

AND he said, That is, and God made answer to the words spoken in the verse before; *And he*
said

said unto him, if they hear not Moses, &c. As if he had said, Moses was a man of great renown, a man of worthy note, a man that talked with God face to face, as man speaketh to his friend : The words that Moses spake, were such as I commanded him to speak : Let who will question them, I will own them, credit them, bless them that close in with them, and curse those that reject them.

I myself sent the prophets, they did not run of their own heads ; I gave them commission ; I thrust them out, and told them what they should say. In a word, they have told the world what my mind is to do, both to sinners and to saints ; *They have Moses, and the prophets, let them hear them.* Therefore, he that shall reject and turn his back either upon the threatenings, counsels, admonitions, invitations, promises, or whatsoever else I have commanded them to speak, as to salvation and life, and to directions therein, shall be sure to have a share in the many curses that they have spoken, and the doctrine that is pronounced by them. Again, *If they hear not Moses and the prophets, &c.* As if he had said, Thou wouldst have me send one from the dead unto them ; what needs that ? they have my mind already, I have declared unto them what I intend to stand to, both for saving them that believe, and damning them that do not. That therefore which I have said, I will make good, whether they hear or forbear. And as for this desire of yours, you had as good desire me to make a new Bible, and so to revoke my first sayings by the mouth of my prophets. But I am God and not man, and my word is immutable, unchangeable, and shall stand as fast as my decrees can make it ; *heaven and earth shall pass away, but one jot or tittle of my word shall not pass.* If thou hadst ten thousand brethren, and every one in danger of losing his soul, if they did not close in with what is contained and recorded in the scriptures of truth, they must even every one of them perish, and be for ever damned in hell ; for the scriptures cannot be broken. I did not send them so unadvisedly to recal it again by
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another consideration. No; *For I speak in righteousness and in judgement*, Isa. 63. 1, 2, 3. and in much wisdom and counsel. It being therefore gone out of my mouth in this manner. *It shall not return in vain until it hath accomplished the thing whereto I have sent it.*

But again, thou supposest that miracles and wonders will work on them, which makes thee say, *Send one from the dead.* But herein thou art mistaken; for I have proved them with that once and again, by more than one, or two, or three of my servants. How many miracles did my servant Moses work by commandment from me in the land of Egypt, at the Red Sea, and in the wilderness? Yet they of that generation were never the sooner converted for that, but notwithstanding rebelled and lusted, and in their hearts turned back into Egypt, Acts 7. How many miracles did Samuel, David, Elias, Elisha, Daniel, and the prophets, together with my Son, who raised the dead, cast out devils, made them to see that were born blind, gave and restored limbs? Yet for all this (as I said before) they hated him, they crucified him. He raised him again from the dead, and he appeared to his disciples, who were called, and chosen. and faithful, and he gave them commandment and commission to go and testify the truth of this to the world; and to confirm the same, he enabled them to speak with divers tongues, and to work miracles most plentifully, yet there was great persecution raised against them, insomuch that but a few of them died in their beds; and therefore, though thou thinkest that a miracle will do so much with the world, yet I say, No: *For if they will not believe Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one should rise from the dead.*

From these words, therefore, take notice of this truth; namely, That those who reject and believe not Moses and the prophets, are a very hard-hearted people, that will not be persuaded tho' one rise from the dead.

They that regard not the holy scriptures, to turn

to God, finding them to testify of his goodness and mercy, there is but little hopes of their salvation: *For they will not, mark, they will not be persuaded though one should rise from the dead.* This truth is confirmed by Jesus himself: If you read John 5. where the Lord is speaking of himself, that he is the very Christ, he brings in four or five witnesses to back what he said: 1. John Baptist; 2. The works that his Father gave him to do; 3. His Father speaking from heaven; 4. The testimony of the scriptures. When all this was done, seeing yet they would not believe, he lays the fault upon one of these two things,

1. Their regarding an esteem among men.

2. Their not believing of the prophets writings, even Moses and the rest. *For had ye believed Moses (saith he) ye would have believed me; for he wrote of me. But if ye believe not his writings, how can ye believe my words?* Now, I say, he that shall slight the scriptures, and the testimony of the prophets in them concerning Jesus Christ, must needs be in great danger of losing his soul, if he abide in this condition; because he that slights the testimony, doth also slight the thing testified of, let him say the contrary never so often. For as Jesus Christ hath here laid down the reason of mens not receiving him, so the apostle in another place lays down the reason again with an high and mighty aggravation, 1 John 5. 10. saying, *He that believeth on the Son of God, hath the witness in himself: he that believeth not on God, hath made him a liar, because he believeth not the record; mark, the record that God gave of his Son.* The record, you will say, what is that? Why, even the testimony that God gave of him by the mouth of all the holy prophets since the world began, Acts 3. 20. That is, God sending his Holy Spirit into the hearts of his servants, the prophets and apostles, he, by his Spirit in them, did bear witness or record to the truth of salvation by his Son Jesus, both before and after his coming. And thus is that place also to be understood, which saith, *There are three that bear record in earth, the Spirit, the water, and the blood; that is,*
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the Spirit in the apostles, which preached him to the world, as is clear, if you read seriously, 1 Thes. 4. 8. The apostle speaking of Jesus Christ, and obedience through him, saith thus, *Now he that despiseth, despiseth not us, but God.* But it is you that speak: true; but it is by and through the Spirit: *He therefore that despiseth, despiseth not man, but God, who also hath given us of his Holy Spirit.* This is therefore a mighty confirmation of this truth, that he that slights the record or testimony that God by his Spirit, in his prophets and apostles, hath testified unto us, slights the testimony of the Spirit, who moved them to speak these things; and if so, then I would fain know, how any man can be saved by Jesus Christ, that slights the testimony concerning Christ; yea, the testimony of his own Spirit, concerning his own self? It is true, men may pretend to have the testimony of the Spirit, and from that conceit set a low esteem on the holy scriptures; but that Spirit that dwelleth in them, and teacheth them so to do, it is no better than the spirit of Satan, though it calls itself by the name of the Spirit of Christ. *To the law therefore, and to the testimony, try them by that; if they speak not according to the word, it is because there is no light in them.*

The apostle Peter, when he speaks of the glorious voice that he had from his excellent Majesty, saying of Christ, *This is my beloved Son, hear him,* saith thus to them whom he wrote unto: *You have also a more sure word of prophecy, (or of the prophets, for so you may read it), unto which you do well that you take heed.* That is, though we tell you that we had this excellent testimony from his own mouth, evidently, yet you have the prophets. We tell you this, and ye need not doubt of the truth of it; but if you should, yet you may not, must not, ought not to question them. Search therefore unto them, until the day dawn, and the day-star arise in your hearts; that is, until, by the same Spirit that gave forth the scriptures, you find the truth confirmed to your souls, which you have recorded in the scriptures. That

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this word of prophecy, or of the prophets, is the scriptures, read on; For, (saith he), *knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scriptures is of any private interpretation, &c.* 2 Pet. 1. 18, 19, 20.

But you will say, What needs all this ado, and why is all this time and pains spent in speaking to this, that is surely believed already? This is a thing received by all, that they believe the scriptures to be the word of God, that sure word of prophecy; and therefore you need not spend your time in proving these things, and the truth of them, seeing we grant and confels the truth of it before you begin to speak your judgement of them.

Ans. 1. The truths of God cannot be borne witness unto too often. You may as well say, You need not preach Jesus Christ so much, seeing he hath been, and is received for the true Messias already.

2. Though many may suppose that they do believe the scriptures, yet if they were but well examined, you will find them either by word of mouth, or else by conversation, to deny, reject, and slight the holy scriptures. It is true, there is a notional, and historical assent in the head, I say, in the head of many, or most, to the truth contained in scripture: But try them, I say, and you shall find but a little, if any, of the faith or the operation of God in the hearts of poor men to believe the scriptures, and things contained in them. Many, yea, most men, believe the scriptures, as they believe a fable, a story, a tale, of which there is no certainty! But alas! there are but few do in deed and in truth believe the scriptures to be the very word of God.

Object. But you will say, This seems strange to me.

Ans. And it seems as true to me: and I doubt not but to make it manifest, that there are but few, yea, very few, that do effectually (for that I aim at) believe the scriptures, and the truths contained in, and spoken of by them. But to make this appear, and that to purpose, (if God will), I shall lay you down the several operations that the scriptures have on them who do effectually believe the things contained in them.

1. He

1. He that doth effectually believe the scriptures, hath, in the first place, been killed, I say, killed by the authority of the holy scriptures; struck stark-dead in a spiritual sense, by the holy scriptures, being set home by that Spirit which gave them forth upon the soul. *The letter killeth*; the letter strikes men dead, 2 Cor. 2. 6. And this Paul witnessed, and found, before he could say, *I believe all that the prophets have spoken*; where he saith, *I was alive without the law once*; that is, in my natural state, before the law was set on my heart with power. *But when the commandment came, sin revived and I died*, Rom. 7. 9. *And that law that was ordained to life, I found to be unto death*; for sin taking occasion by the commandment, deceived me, and thereby slew me, ver. 10. Now that which is called *the letter*, in 2 Cor. is called *the law* in Rom. 7. which by its power and operation, as it is wielded by the Spirit of God, doth in the first place kill and slay all those that are enabled to believe the scriptures. I kill, saith God; that is, with my law I pierce, I wound, I prick men into the very heart, by shewing them their sins against the law, Deut. 32. 69.; Acts 2. 36, 37.; and he that is ignorant of this, is also ignorant of and doth not really and effectually believe the scripture.

But you will say, How doth the law kill and strike dead the poor creatures?

Ans. First, The letter or law doth kill thus: It is set home upon the soul, and discovers to the soul its transgressions against the law; and shews the soul also, that it cannot completely satisfy the justice of God for the breach of his law, therefore it is condemned, John 3. 19. Mark, *He that believeth not, is condemned already*; to wit, by the law; that is, the law doth condemn him; yea, it hath condemned him already for his sins against it; as it is written, *Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things that are written in the book of the law to do them*, Gal. 3. 10. Now all men, as they come into the world, are in this condition, that is, condemned by the

the law: yet not believing their condemnation by the law really, they do not also believe really and effectually the law that doth condemn them. For as men have but a notion of the one, that is, their condemnation, because of sins against the law, so they have but a notion of the condemning, killing, and destroying power of the law: For, as the one is, so in these things always is the other. There is no man that doth really believe the law or gospel, further than they do feel the power and authority of them in their hearts. *Ye err, not knowing the scriptures, nor the power of God.* Now this letter, or law, is not to be taken in the largest sense, but is strictly to be tied to the ten commandments, whose proper work is only by shewing the soul its sin against the law, to kill, and there leaves him stark-dead, not giving him the least life, or support, or comfort, but leaves the soul in an helpless and hopeless condition, as from itself, or any other mere creature.

It is true, the law hath laid all men for dead as they come into the world; but all men do not see themselves dead, until they see the law that struck them dead striking in their souls, and having struck them that fatal blow. As a man that is fast asleep in a house, and that on fire about his ears, and he not knowing of it, because he is asleep; even so, because poor souls are asleep in sin, though the wrath of God, the curse of his law, and the flames of hell have beset them round about, yet they do not believe it, because they are asleep in sin. Now, as he that is awakened and sees this, sees that through this he is a dead man: Even so they that do see their state by nature, being such a sad condition, do also see themselves by that law to be dead men naturally.

But now, when didst thou feel the power of this first part of the scripture, the law, so mighty as to strike thee dead? If not, thou dost not so much as verily believe that part of the scripture, that doth contain the law in it, to be the truth of God. Yet if thou shouldst have felt something, I say, something of the killing power of the law of God in thine heart, this is not

an argument to prove, that thou believest all the things contained in the scripture, for there is gospel as well as law; and therefore I shall speak to that also; that is, whether thou hast felt the power of the gospel, as well as something of the power of the law.

2. Then thou hast found the power of the gospel, and so believed it, thou hast found it thus with thy soul.

1. Thou hast been shewed by the word of truth of the gospel, in the light of the Spirit of Christ, that by nature thou wert without the true faith of the Spirit of Christ, that by nature thou wert without the true faith of the Son of God in thy soul; for when *he, the Spirit is come, he shall shew men that they believe not in me*, saith Christ, John 16. 9. Mark, though thou hast, as I said before, felt somewhat of the power of the law, letter, or ten commandments, yet, as thou hast not been brought to this, to see by the Spirit in the gospel, that thou art without faith by nature, thou hast not yet tasted, much less believed any part of the gospel; for the gospel and the law are two distinct covenants: and they that are under the law may be convinced by it, and so believe the law or first covenant, and yet in the mean time to be a stranger to the covenant of promise, that is the gospel, and so have no hope in them, Ephes. 2. 12. There is not any promise that can be savingly believed, until the soul be by the gospel converted to Jesus Christ. For though men do think never so much that they believe the things or the word of the gospel of our salvation? yet unless they have the work of grace in their souls, they do not, cannot, rightly believe the things contained in the scriptures.

2. Again, As the law killeth those that believe it, even so the promises contained in the gospel, do through faith administer comfort to those that believe it aright. *My words*, saith Christ, *My words, they are Spirit, and they are life*, John 6. 63. As if he had said, The words contained in the law as a covenant of works, they wound, they kill, they strike dead those that are under them. But as for me, *The words that I speak* will

to you, they are Spirit, and they are life. That is, whosoever doth receive them believingly, shall find them full of operation, to comfort, quicken, and revive the soul. For as I did not come into the world to destroy mens lives, so that the words that I speak, (as I am sent to preach the gospel), they have no such tendency unto these that believe them. The promises that are in the gospel, Oh! how do they comfort them! Such a promise, and such a promise, O how sweet is it? How comfortable to those that believe them? Alas, there are many poor souls that think they believe the scriptures to be the word of God, and yet they never enjoyed any thing of the life and promises; they come in upon the heart to quicken, to revive thee, to raise thee from the sentence of death that is passed on thee by the law. And through the faith that is wrought in thy soul, by the operation of God's Holy Spirit, (though once killed by the law or letter), thou art made alive in the Lord Jesus Christ, who is presented to thy soul in the promises.

3. Dost thou in deed and in truth believe the scriptures to be the word of God? Then the things contained in them, especially the things of the gospel, are very excellent to thy soul; as the birth of Christ, the death, resurrection, intercession and second coming. O how precious and excellent are they to thy soul! Insomuch, that thou regardest nothing in comparison of them! O, it is Christ's birth, death, blood, resurrection, &c. according to the scriptures, that thou dost rejoice in exceedingly, and abundantly desire after! Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing ye rejoice, with joy unspeakable, and full of glory, 1 Cor. 15. 1, —6. compared with Phil. 3. 6, 7, 8. 1 Pet. 1. 8.

4. Dost thou believe the scriptures to be the word of God? Then thou standest in awe of, and dost much reverence them. Why, they are the word of God, the true sayings of God; they are the counsel of God; they are his promises and his threatenings. Poor souls are apt to think, if I could hear God speak to me from heaven with an audible voice, then sure I should

should be serious and believe it. But truly, if God should speak to thee from heaven, except thou wert converted, thou wouldst not regard, nor really believe him. But if thou dost believe the scriptures, thou seest that they are the truth, as really as if God should speak to thee from heaven through the clouds, and therefore never flatter thyself, foolishly thinking, that if it were so and so, then thou couldst believe. I tell thee, saith Christ, *If they believe not Moses and the prophets, neither will they believe though one should rise from the dead.* But,

5. Dost thou believe the scriptures to be the word of God? Then through faith in Christ, thou endeavourst to have thy life squared according to the scriptures, both in word and practice. Nay, I say, thou mayst have, though thou do not believe them all. My meaning is, that if thou believe none but the ten commandments, thy life may be according to them, a legal holy life; and if thou do believe the gospel too, then thy life will be the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ; that is, either thou wilt live in the blessed and holy enjoyment of what is testified in the scripture concerning the glorious things of the Lord Jesus Christ, or else thou wilt be exceedingly painting after them. For the scriptures carry such a blessed beauty in them to that soul that hath faith in the things contained in them, that they do take the heart and captivate the soul of him that believeth them, into the love and liking of them, believing all things that are written in the law and the prophets, and have hope towards God, that there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust; and herein do I exercise myself, to have always a conscience void of offence, both towards God and towards man, Acts 24. 14, 15, 16.

6. He that believes the scriptures to be the word of God, if he do but suppose that any one place of scripture doth exclude him, and shut him out of and from a share in the promises contained in them, O it will trouble him, grieve him, perplex him; yea, he will not be satisfied until he be resolved, and the con-

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trary sealed to his soul, for he knows that the scriptures are the word of God, all truth; and therefore he knows, that if any one sentence doth exclude or bar him out for want of this, or the other qualification; he knows also, that not the word alone shuts him out, but he that speaks it, even God himself; and therefore he cannot, will not, dare not be contented until he find his soul and scripture together, (with the things contained therein) to embrace each other, and a sweet correspondency and agreement between them. For you must know, that to him that believes the scriptures aright, the promises, or threatenings, are of more power to comfort or cast down, than all the promises or threatenings of all the men in the world. And this was the cause why the martyrs of Jesus did so slight both the promises of their adversaries, when they would have overcome them with proffering the great things of this world unto them; and also their threatenings, when they told them they would rack them, hang them, burn them, Acts 20. 24. None of these things could prevail upon them, or against them; because they did most really believe the scriptures, and the things contained in them, as is clearly found, and to be seen, in Heb. 11. and also in Mr Fox's records of their brethren.

7. He that believeth the scriptures to be the word of God, believeth that men must be born again, and also be partakers of that faith which is of the operation of God, (according as he hath read and believed), or else he must and shall be damned. And he that believeth this aright, will not be contented until (according as it is written), he do partake of, and enjoy the new birth, and until he do find through grace, that faith that is wrought by the operation of God in his soul. For this is the cause why men do satisfy themselves with so slender a conceited hope that their state is good, (when it is nothing so), namely, because they do not credit the scripture; for did they, they would look into their own hearts, and examine seriously whether that faith, that hope, that grace, which they think they have, be of that nature,

ture, and wrought by that spirit and power which the scripture speaketh of. I speak this of an effectually believing, without which all other is nothing unto salvation. Now then, because I would not be tedious, I shall at this time lay down no more discoveries of such an one as doth savingly believe the scriptures, and the things contained in them, but shall speak a few words of examination concerning the things already mentioned. As

1. Thou sayest thou dost in deed and in truth effectually believe the scriptures: I ask therefore, Wast thou ever killed stark-dead by the law of works contained in the scriptures? Killed by the law or letter, and made to see thy sins against it, and left in an helpless condition by the law? For, as I said, the proper work of the law is to slay the soul and to leave it dead in a helpless state. For it doth neither give the soul any comfort itself when it comes, nor doth it shew the soul where comfort is to be had; and therefore it is called the *ministration of condemnation*, as in 2 Cor. 3. 9. *the ministration of death*, 2 Cor. 3. 7. For though men may have a notion of the blessed word of God, as the children had, yet before they be converted it may truly be said of them, *Ye err, not knowing the scriptures, nor the power of God.*

2. You say you do believe the scriptures to be the word of God. I say again, Examine, wert thou ever quickened from a dead state by the power of the Spirit of Christ through the other part of the scriptures; that is to say, by the power of God in his Son Jesus Christ, through the covenant of promise? I tell thee from the Lord, if thou hast, thou hast felt such a quickening power in the words of Christ, (John 6.) that thou hast been lifted out of that dead condition that thou before wert in; and that when thou wast under the guilt of sin, the curse of the law, and the power of the devil, and the justice of the great God, thou hast been enabled by the power of God in Christ revealed to thee by the Spirit, through and by the scripture, to look sin, death, hell, the devil, and the law, and all things that are at enmity with thee, with

boldness

boldness and comfort in the face, through the blood, death, righteousness, resurrection, and intercession of Christ, made mention of in the scriptures.

And, 3. On this account, O how excellent are the scriptures to thy soul! O how much virtue dost thou see in such a promise, in such an invitation! They are so large as to say, Christ will in no wise cast me out! My crimson sins shall be white as snow! I tell thee, friend, there are some promises that the Lord hath helped me to lay hold of Jesus Christ through and by, that I would not have out of the Bible, for as much gold and silver as can lie between York and London piled up to the stars; because through them Christ is pleased by his Spirit to convey comfort to my soul! I say, when the law curses, when the devil tempts, when hell-fire flames in my conscience, my sins, with the guilt of them, tearing of me, then is Christ revealed so sweetly to my poor soul through the promises, that all is forced to fly and leave off to accuse my soul. So also, when the world frowns, when the enemies rage and threaten to kill me, then also the precious, the exceeding great and precious promises do weigh down all, and comfort the soul against all. This is the effect of believing the scriptures savingly; for they that do so, have by and through the scriptures good comfort, *and also ground of hope*, Rom. 15. 4. believing those things to be its own which the scriptures hold forth.

4. Examine, Dost thou stand in awe of sinning against God, because he hath in the scriptures commanded thee to abstain from it? Dost thou give diligence to make thy calling and election sure, because God commanded it in scripture? Dost thou examine thyself whether thou be in the faith or no, having a command in scripture so to do? Or dost thou (notwithstanding what thou readest in the scripture) follow the world, delight in sin, neglect coming to Jesus Christ, speak evil of the saints, slight and make a mock at the ordinance of God, delight in wicked company, and the like? Then know, that it is because thou dost not in deed and in truth believe the scriptures

scriptures effectually. For as I said before, if a man do believe them, and that savingly, then he stands in awe, he looks to his steps, he turns his feet from evil, and endeavours to follow that which is good, which God hath commanded in the scriptures of truth, yet not from a legal or natural principle; that is, to seek for life by doing that good thing, but knowing that salvation is already obtained for him by the blood of that man Christ Jesus on the cross, because he believes the scriptures; therefore, (mark I pray), therefore I say, he labours to walk with his God in all well-pleasing and godliness, because the sweet power of the love of Christ, which he feels in his soul by the Spirit, according to the scriptures, constrains him so to do, 2 Cor. 5 14.

5. Examine again, Dost thou labour after those qualifications that the scriptures do describe a child of God by? that is, faith, yea the right faith, the most holy faith, the faith of the operation of God? And also dost thou examine whether there is a real growth of grace in thy soul, as love, zeal, self-denial, and a seeking by all means to attain (if possible) to the resurrection of the dead? that is, not to satisfy thyself until thou be dissolved and rid of this body of death, and be transformed into that glory that the saints should be in after the resurrection-day? And in the mean time dost labour and take all opportunities to walk as near as may be to the pitch, though thou know thou canst not attain it perfectly? Yet I say, thou dost aim at it, seek after it, press toward it, and to hold on in thy race; thou shunnest that which may any way hinder thee, and also closest in with what may any way further the same, knowing that that must be, or desiring that it should be thine eternal frame, and therefore out of love and liking to it thou dost desire and long after it, as being the thing that dost most please thy soul.

Or how is it with thy soul? Art thou such an one as regards not these things; but rather busy thy thoughts about the things here below, following those things that have no scent of divine glory upon them?

If

If so, look to thyself, thou art an unbeliever, and so under the wrath of God, and wilt for certain fall into the same place of torment that thy fellows have fallen into before thee, to the grief of thy own soul, and thy everlasting destruction. -

Consider and regard these things, and lay them to thy heart before it be too late to recover thyself, by repenting of the one, and desiring to close in with the other. Oh! I say, regard, regard, for hell is hot. God's hand is up, the law is resolved to discharge against thy soul! The judgement-day is at hand! the graves are ready to fly open! the trumpet is near the sounding! the sentence will ere long be past, and then you and I cannot call time again!

But again, seeing they are so certain, so sure, so irrecoverable and firm, and seeing the saving faith of the things contained therein is to reform the soul, and bring it over to the things of God, really conforming to the things contained therein, both to the point of justification, and also an impartial walking, and giving up thy soul and body to a conformity to all the commands, counsels, instructions, and exhortations contained therein; this then will learn us how to judge of those who give up themselves to walk in the imaginations of their own hearts, who slight and lay aside the scriptures, counting them but empty and uncertain things, and will live every day in open contradiction to what is contained, commanded, and forbidden therein.

As, first, This will shew us that all your drunkards, whoremasters, liars, thieves, swearers, backbiters, slanderers, scoffers at goodness, &c. I say we may see by this, that they that live in such things, have not the faith of these things contained in their hearts, seeing they delight to practise those things that are forbidden by and in them: And so they continuing, living, and dying, in this state, we may conclude without fear, that these portions of holy scripture belong unto them, and shall for certain be fulfilled upon them; *He that believeth not shall be damned,* Mark. 16. 16. *The unrighteous shall not inherit the*
kingdom

kingdom of God, 1 Cor. 6. 9, 10. *But the abominable the unbelieving, the whoremongers, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake that burneth with fire and brimstone, Rev. 21. 8. Depart ye cursed into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels, Matth. 25. 41. Depart, depart from me, for I will not save you. Depart, for my blood shall not at all wash you. Depart, for you shall not set one foot into the kingdom of heaven.*

Depart, ye cursed, ye are cursed of God, cursed of his law, cursed of me, cursed by the saints, and cursed by the angels, cursed all over, nothing but cursed, and therefore depart from me; and whither? Into everlasting fire; fire that will scald, scorch, burn, and flame to purpose: *Fire that shall never be quenched, Mark 9. Fire that will last to all eternity. And must we be all alone? No, you shall have company, store of company with you; namely, all the raging, roaring devils, together with an innumerable company of fellow-damned sinners, men, women, and children. And if the scriptures be true, (as they will one day wonderfully appear to be), then this must and shall be thy portion, if thou live and die in this state, and of all them who continue in sinning against the truth contained in the scriptures.*

As, 1. Dost thou delight to sin against plain commands? *Thou art gone.*

2. Dost thou slight and scorn the counsels contained in the scriptures, and continue in so doing? *Then thou art gone.*

3. Dost thou continually neglect to come to Christ, and usest arguments in thine own heart to satisfy thy soul with so doing? *Then thou art gone, Luke 14. 17, 18. compare with ver. 24. and Heb. 2. 3. How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation? How shall we escape, that is, there is no way to escape.*

1. Because God hath said we shall not, Heb. 12. 25. "See that ye refuse not him that speaketh; for" "if they escaped not who refused him that spake on" "earth, (that was Moses), much more shall not we" "escape,

“escape, if we turn away from him that speaketh
“from heaven”.

2. Because he hath not only said, they shall not,
but also hath bound it with an oath, saying, *So I
swear in my wrath, they shall not enter into my rest,*
Heb. 3. 11. To whom did he swear that they should
not enter into his rest? Answer, To them that believ-
ed not: *So we see they could not enter in, because of
unbelief,* ver. 18, 19.

Secondly, This will teach us what to think and
conclude of such, who though they do not so openly
discover their folly by open and gross sins against the
law, yet will give more heed to their own spirits and
the movings thereof, though they be neither com-
manded, nor commended for the same in scripture;
nay, though the scripture command and commend
the contrary, Isa. 8. 20. than they will to the holy
and revealed will of God. I say, such men are in
as bad a state as the other to the full, being disobe-
dient to God's will revealed in his word as well as
they, though in a different manner; the one openly
transgressing against the plain and well known truths
revealed in it; the other, though more close and
hidden, yet secretly rejecting and slighting them,
giving more heed to their own spirits, and the motions
thereof, although not warranted by the scriptures.

A few words more, and so I shall conclude.

And, 1. Take heed that you content not yourselves
with a bare notion of the scriptures in your heads, by
which you may go far, even so far as to be able to
dispute for the truth, to preach the gospel, and la-
bour to vindicate it in opposition to gainfayers, and
yet be found at the left hand of Christ at the judge-
ment-day, for as much as thou didst content thyself
with a notion or traditional knowledge of them.

2. Have a care that thou own the whole scripture,
and not own one part and neglect another, or slight
it, as thus, to own the law, and slight the gospel,
or to think that thou must be saved by thy good do-
ings and works; for that is all one as if thou didst
thrust Christ away from thee; or else so to own the
gospel,

gospel, as if by it thou wert exempted from all obedience to the ten commandments, and conformity to the law in life and conversation: for in so doing, thou wilt for certain make sure of eternal vengeance.

3. Have a care that thou put not wrong names on the things contained in the scriptures, as to call the law Christ, and Christ the law, for some having done so (in my knowledge) have so darkened to themselves the glorious truth of the gospel, that in a very little time they have been resolved to thwart and oppose them, and so have made room in their own souls for the devil to inhabit, and obtained a place in hell for their own souls to be tormented for ever and ever.

Against this danger therefore, in reading and receiving the testimony of scripture, learn to distinguish between the law and the gospel, and to keep them clear asunder, as to the salvation of thy soul. And that thou mayest so do, in the 1st place, beg of God that he would shew thee the nature of the gospel, and set it home effectually with life and power upon thy soul by faith; which is this, That God would shew thee, that as thou being man, hast sinned against God; so Christ being God-man, hath bought thee again, and with his most precious blood set thee free from the bondage thou hast fallen into by thy sins, and that not upon condition that thou wilt do thus and thus, this and the other good work; but rather, that thou being justified freely by mere grace through the blood of Jesus, shouldst also receive thy strength from him who hath bought thee, to walk before him in all well-pleasing, being enabled there-to by virtue of his Spirit, which hath revealed to thy soul that thou art delivered already from wrath to come, by the obedience, not of thee, but of another man, *viz.* Jesus Christ.

2. Then, if the law thou readest of, tell thee in thy conscience, thou must do this and the other good work of the law, if ever thou wilt be saved; answer plainly, That for thy part thou art resolved now not to work for life, but to believe in the virtue of that blood shed upon the cross, upon Mount Calvary, for the

the remission of sins; and yet because Christ hath justified thee freely by his grace, thou wilt serve him in holiness and righteousness all the days of thy life, yet not in a legal spirit, or in a covenant of works; but mine obedience (say thou) I will endeavour to have it free, and chearful, out of love to my Lord Jesus.

3. Have a care thou receive not this doctrine in the notion only, lest thou bring a just damnation upon thy soul, by professing thyself to be freed by Christ's blood from the guilt of sin, while thou remainest still a servant to the filth of sin. For I must tell you, that unless you have the true and saving work of the faith and grace of the gospel in your hearts, you will either go on in a legal holiness, according to the tenor of the law; or else, through a notion of the gospel (the devil bewitching and beguiling thy understanding, will, and affections) thou wilt, ranter-like, turn the grace of God into wantonness, and bring upon thy soul double, if not treble damnation, in that thou couldest not be contented to be damned for thy sins against the law, but also to make ruin sure to thy soul, thou wouldst dishonour the gospel, and turn the grace of God held forth and discovered to men by that, into licentiousness.

But, that thou mightest be sure to escape these dangerous rocks on the right hand and on the left, see that thy faith be such as is spoken of in the scripture: and that thou be not satisfied without that, which is a faith wrought by the mighty operation of God, revealing Christ to, and in thee, as having wholly freed thee from thy sins by his most precious blood: Which faith, if thou attain unto, will so work in thy heart, that first thou wilt see the nature of the law, and also the nature of the gospel, and delight in the glory of it; and also thou wilt find an engaging of thy heart and soul to Jesus Christ, even to the giving up of thy whole man unto him, to be ruled and governed by him to his glory, and thy comfort, by the faith of the Lord Jesus.

Come,

Come, and Welcome, to Jesus Christ;
or, A plain and profitable discourse on John vi. 37.

Shewing the cause, truth, and manner, of the coming of a sinner to Jesus Christ; with his happy reception, and blessed entertainment.

And they shall come which were ready to perish. Isa. xxvii. 13.

John vi. 37. All that the Father giveth me, shall come to me; and him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out.

ALITTLE before, in this chapter, you may read that the Lord Jesus walked on the sea to go to Capernaum, having sent his disciples before in a ship, but the wind was contrary; by which means the ship was hindered in her passage. Now about the fourth watch of the night,

night, Jesus came walking on the sea, and overtook them; at the sight of whom they were afraid.

Note, When providences are black and terrible to God's people, the Lord Jesus shews himself to them in a wonderful manner; the which, sometimes they can as little bear, as they can the things that were before terrible to them. They were afraid of the wind and water; they were also afraid of their Lord and Saviour, when he appeared to them in that state.

But he said, *Be not afraid, it is I.*

Note, That the end of the appearing of the Lord Jesus unto his people, (though the manner of his appearance be never so terrible), is to allay their fears and perplexities.

Then they received him into the ship, and immediately the ship was at land whither it went.

Note, When Christ is absent from his people, they go on but slowly, and with great difficulty; but when he joineth himself unto them, Oh! how fast they steer their course! how soon are they at their journey's end!

The people now among whom he last preached, when they saw that both Jesus was gone and his disciples, they also took shipping, and came to Capernaum, seeking for Jesus. And when they had found him, they wondering asked him, Rabbi, when camest thou hither? But the Lord Jesus slighting their compliment, answered, *Verily, verily, ye seek me, not because ye saw the miracles, but because ye did eat of the loaves and were filled.*

Note, A people may follow Christ far for base ends, as these went after him beyond sea for loaves. A man's belly will carry him a great way in religion; yea, a man's belly will make him venture far for Christ.

Note again, They are not feigning compliments, but gracious intentions, that crown the work in the eyes of Christ; or thus, it is not the toil and business of

of professors, but their love to him, that makes him approve of them.

Note again, When men shall look for friendly entertainment at Christ's hand, (if their hearts be rotten), even then will they meet with a check and rebuke. *Ye seek me, not because ye saw the miracles, but because ye did eat of the loaves, and were filled.*

Yet observe again, He doth not refuse to give, even to these, good counsel: He bids them labour for the meat that endureth to eternal life. O how willing would Jesus Christ have even those professors that come to him with pretences only, come to him sincerely, that they may be saved.

The text, you will find, is, after much more discourse with and about this people, and it is uttered by the Lord Jesus, as the conclusion of the whole, and intimateth, that since they were professors in pretence only, and therefore such as his soul could not delight in, as such, that he would content himself with a remnant that his Father had bestowed upon him. As who should say, "I am not like to be honoured in your salvation; but the Father hath bestowed upon me a people, and they shall come to me in truth, and in them will I be satisfied." The text before may be called *Christ's repose*; in the fulfilling whereof he resteth himself content, after much labour and many sermons spent, as it were, in vain. As he saith by the prophet, *I have laboured in vain, I have spent my strength for nought, and in vain*, Isa. 49. 4.

But as there he saith, *My judgement is with the Lord, and my work with my God*; so in the text he saith, *All that the Father giveth me, shall come to me; and him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out.* By these words, therefore, the Lord Jesus comforteth himself under the consideration of the dissimulation of some of his followers. He also thus betook himself to rest under the consideration of the little effect

effect that his ministry had in Capernaum, Corazin, and Bethsaida; *I thank thee, O Father*, said he, *Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them to babes; even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight*, Matth. 11. 25; Luke 10. 21.

The text, in the general, consists of two parts, and hath special respects to the Father and the Son; as also their joint management of the salvation of the people. *All that the Father giveth me, shall come to me; and him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out.*

The first part of the text (as is evident) respecteth the Father and his gift; the other part the Son and his reception of that gift.

First, For the gift of the Father there is this to be considered, to wit,

The gift itself; and that is the gift of certain persons to the Son. The Father giveth, and that gift shall come: *And him that cometh*. The gift then is of persons; the Father giveth persons to Jesus Christ.

Secondly, Next you have the Son's reception of this gift, and that sheweth itself in these particulars:

1. In his hearty acknowledgement of it to be a gift: *The Father giveth me.*

2. In his taking notice, after a solemn manner, of all and every part of the gift: *All that the Father giveth me.*

3. In his resolution to bring them to himself: *All that the Father giveth me, shall come to me.*

4. And in his determining, that not any thing shall make him dislike them in their coming: *And him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out.*

These things might be spoken to at large, as they are in this method presented to view: But I shall chuse to speak to the words,

1. By way of explication.

2. By way of observation.

FIRST, By way of explication, *ALL that the Father giveth me*. This word *all*, is often used in scripture,

ture, and is to be taken more largely, or more strictly, even as the truth or argument, for the sake of which it is made use of, will bear: Wherefore that we may better understand the mind of Christ, in the use of it here, we must consider, that it is limited and restrained only to those that shall be saved, to wit, to those that shall come to Christ; even to those whom he will *in no wise cast out*. Thus also the words, *all Israel*, is sometimes to be taken, (though sometimes it is taken for the whole family of Jacob). And so *all Israel shall be saved*, Rom. 11. By *all Israel*, here, he intendeth not all of Israel, in the largest sense; for they are not all Israel which are of Israel; *neither because they are the seed of Abraham, are they all children; but in Isaac shall thy seed be called*; (that is), *They who are the children of the flesh; these are not the children of God, but the children of the promise are counted for their seed*, Rom. 9. 6, 7, 8.

This word *all*, therefore, must be limited, and enlarged, as the truth and argument for the sake of which it is used will bear; else we shall abuse scriptures and readers, and ourselves, and all. And *I, if I be lifted up from the earth*, said Christ, *will draw all men after me*, John 12. 32. Can any one imagine, that by *all*, in this place, he should mean all and every individual man in the world, and not rather that all that is consonant to the scope of the place? And if, by being *lifted up from the earth*, he means, as he should seem his being taken up into heaven; and if, by *drawing all men after him*, he meant a drawing them into the place of glory; then must he mean by *all men*, those, and only those, that shall in truth be eternally saved from the wrath to come: *For God hath concluded them all in unbelief, that he might have mercy upon all*, Rom. 11. 32. Here again you have *all* and *all*, two *alls*; but yet a greater disparity between the *all* made mention of in the first place, and that *all* made mention of in the second. Those intended in this text are the Jews, even all of them, by the first *all* that you find in the words.

words. The second *all* doth also intend the same people; but yet only so many of them as God will have mercy upon. *He hath concluded them all in unbelief; that he might have mercy upon all.* The *all* also in the text, is likewise to be limited and restrained to be saved, and them only. But again,

The word *giveth*, or *hath given*, must be restrained, after the same manner, to the same limited number: *All that the Father giveth me.* Not all that are given, if you take the gift of the Father to the Son, in the largest sense; for in that sense there are many given to him that shall never come unto him; yea, many are given unto him, that *he will cast out.* I shall therefore first shew you the truth of this, and then in what sense the gift in the text must be taken.

First, That all that are given to Christ, if you take the gift of the Father to him, in the largest sense, cannot be intended in the text, is evident,

1. Because then all the men, yea, all the things in the world, must be saved. *All things*, said he, *are delivered unto me by the Father*, Matth. 11. 27. This, I think, no rational man in the world will conclude: Therefore the gift intended in the text, must be restrained to some, to a gift that is given by way of speciality by the Father to the Son.

2. It must not be taken for *all*, that in any sense are given by the Father to him, because the Father hath given some, yea, many to him, to be dashed in pieces by him. *Ask of me*, said the Father to him, *and I will give thee the Heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession.* But what must be done with them? must he save them all? No, *Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron; thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel*, Psal. 2. This method he useth not with them that he saveth by his grace, but with those that himself and saints shall rule over in justice and severity, Rev. 2. 26, 27.; yet, as you see, *they are given to him*; therefore the gift intended in the text, must be restrained to some, to a gift that is given by way of speciality by the Father to the Son.

In Psalm 18. he saith plainly, that some are given to him that he might destroy them: *Thou hast given me the necks of mine enemies, that I might destroy them that hate me*, ver. 40. These therefore cannot be of the number of those that are said to be given in the text; for those, even all of them, shall come to him, and *he will in no wise cast them out*.

3. Some are given to Christ, that he by them might bring about some for his high and deep designs in the world. Thus Judas was given to Christ, to wit, that by him, even as he was determined before, he might bring about his death, and so the salvation of his elect by his blood. Yea, and Judas must so manage this business, as that he must lose himself for ever in bringing it to pass. Therefore the Lord Jesus, even in his losing of Judas, applies himself to the judgement of his Father, if he had not in that thing done that which was right, even in suffering of Judas so to bring about his master's death, as that he might by so doing bring about his own eternal damnation also.

Those said he, that thou gavest me, have I kept, and none of them is lost, but the son of perdition, that the scriptures might be fulfilled, John 17. 12. Let us then grant that Judas was given to Christ, but not as others are given to him, nor as those made mention of in the text; for then he should not have failed to have been so received by Christ, and kept to eternal life. Indeed he was given to Christ; but he was given to him to lose him, in the way that I have mentioned before; he was given to Christ, that he by him might bring about his own death, as was before determined; and that in the overthrow of him that did it. Yea, he must bring about his own death, as before determined, and that in the overthrow of him that did it. Yea, he must bring about his dying for us in the loss of the instrument that betrayed him, that he might even fulfill the scripture in his destruction, as well as in the salvation of the rest. And none of them is lost, but the son of perdition, that the scripture might be fulfilled.

The gift therefore in the text must not be taken in the largest sense, but even as the words will bear, to wit, for such a gift as he accepteth, and promiseth to be an effectual means of eternal salvation to. *All that the Father giveth me, shall come to me; and him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out.* Mark! They shall come that are in special given to me; and they shall by no means be rejected: For this is the substance of the text.

Those, therefore, intended as the gift in the text, are those that are given by covenant to the Son; those that in other places are called the *elect*, the *chosen*, the *sheep*, and the *children of the promise*, &c.

These be they that the Father hath given to Christ to keep them; those that Christ hath promised eternal life unto; those to whom he hath given his word, and that he will have with him in his kingdom to behold his glory.

This is the will of the Father that hath sent me, that of all that he hath given me, I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day. And I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish; neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. My Father that gave them me, is greater than all: And no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand. As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him. Thine they were, and thou gavest them me, and they have kept thy word; I pray for them, I pray not for the world, but for those that thou hast given me; for they are thine. And all mine are thine, and thine are mine; and I am glorified in them.

Keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one as we are. Father, I will, that those whom thou hast given me, may be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory which thou hast given me; for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world, John 6. 39.; chap. 10. 28.; and chap. 17. 1, 6, 9, 10, 24.

All these sentences are of the same import with the text; and the *alls* and the *manies*, *those*, *they*, &c.

Come, and welcome, to Jesus Christ.

&c. in these several sayings of Christ, are the same with *all the given* in the text: *All that the Father giveth.*

So that (as I said before) the word *all*, as also other words, must not be taken in such sort as our foolish fancies or groundless opinions will prompt us to, but do admit of an enlargement or a restriction, according to the true meaning and intent of the text. We must therefore diligently consult the meaning of the text, by comparing it with other the sayings of God; so shall we be better able to find out the mind of the Lord, in the word which he has given us to know it by.

All that the Father giveth.—By this word *Father*, Christ describeth the person giving; by which we may learn several useful things: 1. That the Lord God, and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, is concerned with the Son in the salvation of his people. True, his acts, as to our salvation, are diverse from those of the Son; he was not capable of doing that, or those things for us, as did the Son; he died not, he spilt not blood for our redemption, as the Son; but yet he hath a hand, a great hand in our salvation too. As Christ saith, *The Father himself loveth you*, and his love is manifest in chusing of us, in giving of us to his Son; yea, and in giving his Son also to be a ransom for us. Hence he is called, *The Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort.* For here even the Father hath himself found out, and made way for his grace to come to us through the sides, and the heart-blood of his well beloved Son, Col. 1. 12. The Father therefore is to be remembered and adored as one having a chief hand in the salvation of sinners. *We ought to give thanks to the Father, who hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light; for the Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world,* 1 John 4. 14.; Col. 1. 12. As also we see in the text, the *Father giveth* the sinner to Christ to save him.

2. Christ Jesus the Lord, by this word *Father*, would familiarise this giver to us. Naturally the name of

of God is dreadful to us, especially when he is discovered to us by those names that declare his justice, holiness, power, and glory; but now this word *Father* is a familiar word, it frighteth not the sinner, but rather inclineth his heart to love, and be pleased with the remembrance of him. Hence Christ also, when he would have us to pray with godly boldness, puts this word *Father* into our mouths, saying, when ye pray, say, *Our Father which art in heaven*; concluding thereby, that by the familiarity that by such a word is intimated, the children of God may take more boldness to pray for, and ask great things. I myself have often found, that when I can say but this word *Father*, it doth me more good than when I call him by any other scripture-name. It is worth your noting, that to call God by his relative title, was rare among the saints in Old-Testament times. Seldom do you find him called by this name, no, sometimes not in three or four books; but now in New Testament times, he is called by no name so often as this, both by the Lord Jesus himself, and by the apostles afterwards. Indeed the Lord Jesus was he that first made this name common among the saints, and that taught them, both in their discourses, their prayers, and in their writings, so much to use it; it being more pleasing to, and discovering more plainly our interest in God, than any other expression; for by this one name we are made to understand that all our mercies are the offspring of God, and that we also that are called, are his children by adoption.

All that the Father giveth.—This word *giveth* is out of Christ's ordinary dialect, and seemeth to intimate, at the first sound, as if the Father's gift to the Son was not an act that is past, but one that is present and continuing; when indeed this gift was bestowed upon Christ when the covenant, the eternal covenant, was made between them before all worlds. Wherefore, in those other places, when this gift is mentioned, it is still spoken of as of an act that is past: As, *All that he hath given me; to as many as thou hast given me: thou gavest them me, and these* which

which thou hast given me. Therefore of necessity this must be the first and chief sense of the text; I mean of this word *giveth*, otherwise the doctrine of election, and of the eternal covenant which was made between the Father and the Son, (in which covenant this gift of the Father is most certainly comprised), will be shaken, or at leastwise questionable by erroneous and wicked men: for they may say, That the Father gave not all those to Christ that shall be saved, before the world was made; for that this act of giving is an act of continuation.

But again, this word *giveth* is not to be rejected; for it hath its proper use, and may signify to us,

1. That though the act of giving among men doth admit of the time past, or the time to come, and is to be spoken of with reference to such time; yet with God it is not so. Things past, or things to come are always present with God, and with his Son Jesus Christ: *He calleth things that are not that is, to us as tho' they were.* And again, *Known unto God are all his works from the foundation of the world.* All things to God are present, and so the gift of the Father to the Son, although to us, as is manifest by the word, it is an act that is past, Rom. 4. 17.; Acts 15. 10.

2. Christ may express himself thus, to shew, that the Father hath not only given him this portion in the lump, before the world was, but that those that he had so given, he will give him again; that is, will bring them to him at the time of their conversion; *for the Father bringeth them to Christ,* John 6. 44.

As it is said, *She shall be brought unto the king in raiment of needle-work;* that is, in the righteousness of Christ; for it is God imputeth that to those that are saved, Psal. 45. 14.; 1 Cor. 1.

A man giveth his daughter to such a man, first in order to marriage, and this respects the time past, and he giveth her again at the day appointed in marriage: And in this last sense, perhaps, the text may have a meaning; that is, that all that the Father hath (before the world was) given to Jesus Christ, he

he giveth them again to him, in the day of their espousals.

Things that are given among men, are oft-times best at first, to wit, when they are new; and the reason is, because all earthly things wax old; but with Christ it is not so: This gift of the Father is not old and deformed, and unpleasant in his eyes; and therefore to him it is always new. When the Lord spake of giving the land of Canaan to the Israelites, he saith not, that he had given, or would give it to them, but thus: *The Lord thy God giveth thee this good land*, Deut. 11. 6. Not but that he had given it to them, while they were in the loins of their fathers, hundreds of years before. Yet he saith *now* he *giveth* it to them; as if they were now also in the very act of taking possession, when as yet they were on the other side Jordan. What then should be the meaning? Why, I take it to be this: That the land should be to them always as new; as new, as if they were taking possession thereof but now. And so is the gift of the Father mentioned in the text to the Son; it is always new, as if it were always new.

All that the Father giveth me. In these words you find mention made of two persons, the Father and the Son: the Father giving, and the Son receiving or accepting of this gift. This then, in the first place, clearly demonstrateth, that the Father and the Son, though they, with the Holy Ghost, are one and the same eternal God; yet, as to their personality, are distinct. The Father is one, the Son is one, the holy Spirit is one. But because there is in this text mention made but of two of the three, therefore a word about these two. The giver and receiver cannot be the same person in a proper sense, in the same act of giving and receiving. He that giveth, giveth not to himself, but to another; the Father giveth not to the Father, to wit, to himself; but to the Son; the Son receiveth not of the Son, to wit, of himself, but of the Father: so when the Father giveth commandment, he giveth it not to himself, but to another;

as Christ saith, He hath given me a commandment, John 12. 49. So again, *I am one that beareth witness of myself, and the Father that sent me, beareth witness of me*, John 10. 18.

Further, here is something implied that is not expressed, to wit, that the Father hath not given all men to Christ; that is, in that sense as is intended in the text, though in a larger as was said before he hath given him every one of them; for then all should be saved; he hath therefore disposed of some another way. He gives some up to idolatry; he gives some up to uncleanness, to vile affections, and to a reprobate mind. Now these he disposeth of in his anger, for their destruction, (Acts 7. 42.; Rom. 1. 24, 26, 28.) that they may reap the fruit of their doings, and be filled with the reward of their own ways. But neither hath he thus disposed of all men; he hath even of mercy reserved some from these judgments, and those are they that he will pardon, as he saith, *For I will pardon them whom I reserve*, Jer. 50. 20. Now these he hath given to Jesus Christ by will, as a legacy and portion. Hence the Lord Jesus says, *This is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me, I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day.*

The Father therefore, in giving of them to him to save them, must needs declare unto us these following things:

1. That he is able to answer this design of God, viz. to save them to the uttermost sin, the uttermost temptation, &c. Heb. 7. 25. Hence he is said to *lay help on one that is mighty, mighty to save*; and hence it is again, that God did even of old promise to send his people a Saviour, a great one, Psal. 89. 19.; Isa. 63. 1. To save is a great work, and calls for almightiness in the undertaker; hence he is called the *Mighty God, the wonderful counsellor*, &c. Sin is strong, Satan is also strong, death and the grave are strong, and so is the curse of the law; therefore it follows, that this Jesus must needs be by God the Father accounted almighty, in that he hath given his elect to him to save them,

them, and deliver them from these, and that in despite of all their force and power.

And he gave us testimony of this his might, when he was employed in that part of our deliverance that called for a declaration of it. He abolished death; he destroyed him that had the power of death; he was the destruction of the grave; he hath finished sin, and made an end of it, as to its damning effect upon the persons that the Father hath given him; he hath vanquished the curse of the law, nailed it to his cross, triumphed over them upon his cross, and made a shew of these things openly, 2 Tim. 1. 10.; Heb. 2. 14, 15.; Hos. 13. 14.; Dan. 9. 24.; Gal. 3. 13.; Col. 2. 14, 15.

Yea, and even now, as a sign of his triumph and conquest, he is alive from the dead, and hath the keys of hell and death in his own keeping, Rev. 1. 18.

2. The Father's giving of them to him to save them, declares unto us that he is and will be faithful in his office of Mediator, and that therefore they shall be secured from the fruit and wages of their sins, which is eternal damnation, by his faithful execution of it. And indeed it is said, even by the Holy Ghost himself. *That he is faithful to him that appointed him*; that is, to this work of saving those that the Father hath given him for that purpose; as *Moses was faithful in all his house*. Yea, and more faithful too, for Moses was faithful in God's house, but as a servant; but *Christ as a Son, over his own house*, Heb. 3.

And therefore this man is counted worthy of more glory than Moses, even upon this account, because more faithful than he, as well as because of the dignity of his person. Therefore in him, and in his truths and faithfulness, God rested well pleased, and all the government of his people upon his shoulders. Knowing, that nothing shall be wanting in him, that may any way perfect the design. And of this he, to wit, the Son, hath already given a proof: For when the time was come, that his blood was by divine justice required for their redemption, washing, and cleansing, he as freely poured it out of his heart

as if it had been water out of a vessel: not sticking to part with his own life, that the life which was laid up for his people in heaven might not fail to be bestowed upon them. And upon this account (as well as upon any other) it is that God calleth him the *righteous servant*, Isa. 53. For his righteousness could never have been complete, if he had not been to the uttermost faithful to the work he undertook: it is also, because he is faithful and true, that in righteousness he doth judge and make work for his people's deliverance. He will faithfully perform this trust reposed in him: The Father knows this, and hath therefore given his elect unto him.

3. The Father giving of them to him, to save them, declares that he is, and will be gentle and patient towards them, under all their provocations and miscarriages. It is not to be imagined, the trials and provocations that the Son of God hath all along had with these people that have been given to him to save: indeed he is said to be a tried stone; for he has been tried, not only by the devil, guilt of sin, death, and the curse of the law, but also by his people's ignorance, unruliness, falls into sin, and declining to errors in life and doctrine. Were we but capable of seeing how this Lord Jesus has been tried even by his people, ever since there was one of them in the world, we should be amazed at his patience and gentle carriage to them. It is said, indeed, *The Lord is very pitiful, slow to anger, and of great mercy*: And indeed, if he had not been so, he could never have endured their manners as he has done from Adam hitherto. Therefore is his pity and bowels towards his church preferred above the pity and bowels of a mother towards her child. *Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? Yea, they may forget, yet I will not forget thee, saith the Lord, Isa. 49. 15.*

God did once give Moses, as Christ's servant, a handful of his people, to carry them in his bosom, but no farther than from Egypt to Canaan; and this Moses, as is said of him by the Holy Ghost, was the meekest

meekest man that was then to be found on the earth; yea, and he loved the people at a very great rate; yet neither would his meekness nor love hold out in this work; he failed and grew passionate, even to provoking his God to anger under this work. *And Moses said unto the Lord, Wherefore hast thou afflicted thy servant? But what was the affliction? Why, the Lord had said unto him, Carry this people in thy bosom as a nursing father beareth his suckling child, unto the land that he swore unto their fathers. And how then? Not I, says Moses, I am not able to bear all this people, because it is too heavy for me: If thou deal thus with me, kill me, I pray thee, out of hand, and let me not see my wretchedness, Numb. 11. 11, 12, 13, 14.* God gave them to Moses, that he might carry them in his bosom, that he might shew gentleness and patience towards them, under all the provocations wherewith they would provoke him from that time till he had brought them to their land; but he failed in the work; he could not exercise it, because he had not that sufficiency of patience towards them: But now it is said of the person speaking in the text, *That he shall gather his lambs with his arm, shall carry them in his bosom, and shall gently lead them that are with young, Isa. 40. 10. 11.*; intimating, that this was one of the qualifications that God looked for, and knew was in him, when he gave his elect to him to save them.

4. The Father giving of them to him to save them, declares that he hath a sufficiency of wisdom to wage with all those difficulties that would attend him in his bringing of his sons and daughters unto glory, 1 Cor. 1. 30. *He hath made him to us to be wisdom; yea, he is called wisdom itself. And God saith moreover, That he shall deal prudently, Isa. 52. 13.* And, indeed, he that shall take upon him to be the Saviour of the people, had need be wise, because their adversaries are subtle above any. Here they are to encounter with the serpent, who for his subtilty outwitted our father and mother, when their wisdom was at highest, Gen. 3. But if we talk of wisdom,
our

our Jesus is wise, wiser than Solomon, wiser than all men, wiser than all angels; he is even the wisdom of God. *Christ is the wisdom of God*, Col. 1. 1. And hence it is that he turneth sin, temptations, persecutions, falls, and all things, for good unto his people, Rom. 8.

Now these things thus concluded on, do shew us also the great and wonderful love of the Father, in that he should chuse out one every way so well prepared for the work of man's salvation.

Herein indeed perceive we the love of God. Huram gathered, that God loved Israel, because he had given them such a king as Solomon, 2 Chron. 2. 11.; but how much more may we behold the love that God hath bestowed upon us, in that he hath given us to his Son, and also given his Son for us.

All that the Father giveth me shall come.—In these last words there is closely inserted an answer unto the Father's end in giving of his elect to Jesus Christ. The Father's end was, that they might come to him, and be saved by him; and that, says the Son, shall be done; neither sin nor Satan, neither flesh nor world, neither wisdom nor folly, shall hinder their coming to me. *They shall come to me, and him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out.*

Here therefore the Lord Jesus positively determineth to put forth such a sufficiency of all grace, as shall effectually perform this promise. *They shall come*; that is, he will cause them to come, by infusing of an effectual blessing into all the means that shall be used to that end. As was said to the evil spirit that was sent to persuade Ahab to go and fall at Ramoth-Gilead; *Go: Thou shalt persuade him and prevail also; go forth, and do so*, 1 Kings 22. 22.; so will Jesus Christ say to the means that shall be used for the bringing of those to him that the Father hath given him. I say, he will bless it effectually to this very end; it shall persuade them, and shall prevail also: else, as I said, the Father's end would be frustrate; for the Father's will is, that of *all that he hath given him, he should lose nothing, but should*

should raise it up at the last day; in order next unto himself, Christ the first-fruits, afterwards those that are his at his coming, 1 Cor. 15. But this cannot be done, if there should fail to be a work of grace effectually wrought, though but in any one of them. But this shall not fail to be wrought in them, even in all the Father hath given him to save. *All that the Father hath given me, shall come unto me, &c.*

But to speak more distinctly to the words, *They shall come*, two things I would shew you from these words: 1. What it is to come to Christ. 2. What force there is in this promise, to make them come to him.

1. I would shew you what it is to come to Christ. This word *come* must be understood spiritually, not carnally; for many come to him carnally, or bodily, that had no saving advantage by him: Multitudes did thus come unto him in the days of his flesh, yea, innumerable companies. There is also at this day a formal customary coming to his ordinances, and way of worship, which availeth not any thing; but with them I shall not now meddle; for they are not intended in the text. The coming then intended in the text is to be understood of the coming of the mind to him, even the moving of the heart towards him, I say the moving of the heart towards him, from a sound sense of the absolute want that a man hath of him for his justification and salvation.

This description of coming to Christ divideth itself into two heads: 1. That coming to Christ is a moving of the mind towards him; 2. That it is a moving of the mind towards him, from a sound sense of the absolute want that a man hath of him for his justification and salvation.

To speak to the *first*, That it is a moving of the mind towards him. This is evident, because coming hither or thither, if it be voluntary, is by an act of the mind or will; so coming to Christ is through the inclining of the will. *Thy people shall be willing*, Plal. 110. 3. This willingness of heart is it which sets the mind a-moving after, or towards him. The church

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church expresseth this moving of her mind towards Christ, by the moving of her bowels. *My beloved put in his hand by the hole of the door, and my bowels were moved for him, Song 5. 4. My bowels; the passions of my mind and affections; which passions of the affections are expressed by the yearning and founding of the bowels, the yearning and passionate working of them, the founding of them, or their making a noise for him, Gen. 43. 30.; 1 Kings 3. 26.; Isa. 16, 11.*

This then is the coming to Christ, even a moving towards him with the mind. *And it shall come to pass, that every thing that liveth, which moveth whithersoever the water shall come, shall live.*

The water in this text is the grace of God in the doctrine of it. The living things are the children of men, to whom the grace of God, by the gospel, is preached. Now, saith he, *every living thing which moveth whithersoever the water shall come, shall live.* And see how this word *moveth* is expounded by Christ himself, in the book of the Revelations. *The Spirit and the bride say, Come, and let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst, come. And whosoever will, (that is, willing), let him take the water of life freely, Rev. 22. 17.*

So that to move in thy mind and will after Christ, is to be coming to him. There are many poor souls that are coming to Christ, that yet cannot tell how to believe it, because they think that coming to him is some strange and wonderful thing; and indeed so it is: But I mean, they overlook the inclination of their will, the moving of their mind, and the founding of their bowels after him; and count these none of this strange and wonderful thing; when indeed it is a work of greatest wonder in this world, to see a man who was sometimes dead in sin, possessed of the devil, an enemy to Christ, and to all things spiritually good: I say, to see this man moving with his mind after the Lord Jesus Christ, is one of the highest wonders in the world.

2dly, It is a moving of the mind towards him, from

from a sound sense of the absolute want that a man hath of him for his justification and salvation. Indeed, without this sense of a lost condition without him, there will be no moving of the mind towards him: A moving of their mouth there may be; *With their mouth they shew much love*, Ezek. 33. 31. Such a people as this will come as the true people cometh; that is, in shew and outward appearance: And they will sit before God's ministers, as his people sit before them; and they will hear his words too, but they will not do them; that is, will not come inwardly with their minds: *For with their mouth they shew much love, but their heart (or mind) goeth after their covetousness*. Now all this is, because they want an effectual sense of the misery of their state by nature; for not till they have that, will they in their mind move after him. Therefore thus it is said concerning the true comers, *At that day the great trumpet shall be blown, and they shall come which were ready to perish in the land of Assyria, and the outcasts of the land of Egypt, and shall worship the Lord in his holy mountain, at Jerusalem*, Isa. 27. 13. They are then (as you see) the outcasts, and those that are ready to perish, that indeed have their minds effectually moved to come to Jesus Christ. This sense of things was that which made the three thousand come, that made Saul come, that made the jailor come, and that indeed makes all others come, that come effectually, Acts 2. 8, 16.

Of the true coming to Christ, the three lepers were a famous semblance, of whom you read, 2 Kings 7. 3. &c. The famine in those days was fore in the land, there was no bread for the people; and as for that sustenance that was, which was asses flesh, and doves dung, that was only in Samaria, and of these the lepers had no share, for they were thrust without the city. Well, now they sat in the gate of the city, and the hunger was, as I may say, making his last meal of them; and being therefore half-dead already, what do they think of doing? Why, first they disply the dismal colours of death before each

other's faces, and then resolves what to do, saying, *If we say we will go into the city, then the famine is in the city, and we shall die there; if we sit still here we die also; Now therefore come, let us fall into the host of the Syrians, if they save us alive we shall live; if they kill us we shall but die.* Here now was necessity at work, and this necessity drove them to go thither for life, whither else they would never have gone for it. Thus it is with them that in truth come to Jesus Christ: Death is before them, they see it, and feel it, he is feeding upon them, and will eat them quite up, if they come not to Jesus Christ; and therefore they come, even of necessity, being forced thereto by that sense they have of their being utterly and everlastingly undone, if they find not safety in him.

These are they that will come; Indeed these are they that are invited to come. *Come unto me all ye that labour, and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest,* Matth. 11. 21.

Take two or three things to make this more plain; to wit, That coming to Christ floweth from a sound sense of the absolute need that a man hath of him, as afore.

(1.) *They shall come with weeping, and with supplication will I lead them; I will cause them to walk by rivers of waters in a plain way wherein they shall not stumble* Jer. 31. 9. Mind it! they come with weeping and supplication; they come with prayers and tears. Now prayers and tears are the effects of a right sense of the need of mercy. Thus a senseless sinner cannot come, he cannot pray, he cannot cry, he cannot come sensible of what he sees not, nor feels. *In those days, and at that time, the children of Israel shall come: they and the children of Judah together, going and weeping; they shall seek the Lord their God; they shall ask their way to Zion, with their faces thitherward, saying, Come, and let us join ourselves to the Lord in a perpetual covenant that shall not be forgotten,* Jer. 50. 4, 5.

(2.) This coming to Christ, it is called a running

to him, as flying to him; a flying to him from wrath to come. By all which terms is set forth the sense of the man that comes; to wit, That he is affected with the sense of his sin, and the death due thereto; that he is sensible that the avenger of blood pursues him; and that therefore he is cut off, if he makes not speed to the Son of God for life, Matth. 3. 7.; Psal. 143. 9. Flying is the last work of a man in danger, all that are in danger do not fly; no, not all that see themselves in danger; all that hear of danger, will not fly. Men will consider if there be no other way of escape before they fly. Therefore, as I said, flying is the last thing. When all refuge fails, and a man is made to see that there is nothing left him but sin, death, and damnation, unless he flies to Christ for life; then he flies, and not till then.

(3.) That the true coming is from a sense of an absolute need of Jesus Christ to save, &c. is evident by the out-cry that is made by them to come, even as they are coming to him, Math. 14. 30.; Acts 2. 37.; Acts 16. 30. *Lord save me or I perish; Men and brethren, what shall we do; Sirs, what must I do to be saved,* (and the like). This language doth sufficiently discover that the truly-coming souls, are souls sensible of their need of salvation by Jesus Christ: and moreover, that there is nothing else that can help them but Christ.

(4.) It is yet farther evident by these few things that follow: It is said, that such are pricked in their hearts, that is, with the sentence of death by the law; and the least prick in the heart kills a man, Acts 2. 37. Such are said, as I said before, to weep, to tremble, and to be astonished in themselves at the evident and unavoidable danger that attends them, unless they fly to Jesus Christ, Acts 9. 16.

(5.) Coming to Christ is attended with an honest and sincere forsaking all for him. *If any man come unto me and hateth not his father and mother, and wife and children, and brethren and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple; and whosoever doth not bear his cross, and come after me, cannot be my disciple,* Luke 14. 26, 27.

By these and the like expreffions elfewhere, Chrift describeth the true comer, or the man that indeed is coming to him; he is one that cafteth all behind his back; he leaveth all, he forfaketh all, he hateth all things that would ftand in his way to hinder his coming to Jesus Chrift. There are a great many pretended comers to Jesus Chrift in the world. And they are much like to the man you read of in Matth. 21. 30. that faid to his Father's bidding, *I go, Sir, and went not.* I fay, there are a great many fuch comers to Jesus Chrift; they fay, when Chrift calls by his gospel, I come, Sir, but ftill they abide by their pleafure and carnal delights. They come not all, only they give him a courtly compliment; but he takes notice of it, and will not let it pafs for any more than a lie; He faid, *I go, Sir, and went not,* he difsembled and lied. Take heed of this, you that flatter yourfelves with your own deceivings. Words will not do with Jesus Chrift: Coming is coming, and nothing elfe will go for coming with him.

Before I fpeak to the other head, I fhall answer fome objections that ufually lie in the way of thofe that in truth are coming to Jesus Chrift.

Objection 1. Though I cannot deny, but my mind runs after Chrift, and that too as being moved there-to from a fight and confideration of my loft condition, (for I fee without him I perifh), yet I fear my ends are not right in coming to him.

Queft. Why, what is thine end in coming to Chrift?

Ans. My end is, that I might have life, and be faved by Jesus Chrift.

This is the objection; well, let me tell thee, that to come to Chrift for life, and to be faved, although at prefent thou haft no other end, is a lawful and good coming to Jesus Chrift. This is evident, becaufe Chrift propoundeth life as the only argument to prevail with finners to come to him, and fo alfo blameth them becaufe they come not to him for life. *And ye will not come to me that ye might have life,* John 5. 3. Befides, there are many other fcriptures whereby he

allureth

allureth sinners to come to him, in which he propoundeth nothing to them but their safety. As, *He that believeth in him shall not perish; he that believeth is passed from death to life. He that believeth shall be saved, He that believeth on him is not condemned.* And believing and coming are all one. So that you see to come to Christ for life, is a lawful coming, and good.

In that he believeth, that he alone hath made atonement for sin, Rom. 2.

And let me add over and above, that for a man to come to Christ for life, though he come to him for nothing else but life, it is to give much honour to him.

1st, He honoureth the word of Christ, and consenteth to the truth of it; and that in these two general heads.

(1.) He consenteth to the truth of all those sayings that testify, that sin is most abominable in itself, dishonourable to God, and damnable to the soul of man; for thus thus saith the man that cometh to Jesus Christ, Jer. 44. 4.; Rom. 2. 23.; chap. 6. 23.; 2 Thess. 2. 12.

(2.) In that he believeth, as the word hath said, that there is in the world's best things, righteousness and all, nothing but death and damnation; for so also says the man that comes to Jesus Christ for life, Rom. 7. 24, 25.; chap. 8. 2, 3; 2 Cor. 3. 6, 7, 8.

2^{dly}, He honoureth Christ's person, in that he believeth that there is life in him, and that he is able to save him from death, hell, the devil, and damnation; for unless a man believes this, he will not come to Christ for life, Heb. 7. 24, 25.

3^{dly}, He honoureth him, in that he believeth that he is authorised of the Father to give life to those that come to him for it, John 5. 11, 12.; ch. 17. 1, 2.

4^{thly}, He honoureth the priesthood of Jesus Christ.

(1.) In that he believeth that Christ hath more power to save from sin by the sacrifice that he hath offered for it, than hath all law, devils, death, or sin

sin to condemn: He that believeth not this, will not come to Jesus Christ for life, Acts 13. 38.; Heb. 2. 14, 15.; Rev. 1. 17, 18.

(2.) In that he believeth that Christ, according to his office, will be most faithful and merciful in the discharge of his office. This must be included in the faith of him that comes for life to Jesus Christ, 1 John 2. 1, 2, 3.; Heb. 2. 17, 18.

5thly, Further, He that cometh to Jesus Christ for life, taketh part with him against sin, and against the ragged and imperfect righteousness of the world! yea, and against false Christs, and damnable errors, that set themselves against the worthiness of his merits and sufficiency. This is evident, for that such a soul singlenth Christ from them all, as the only one that can save.

6thly, Therefore as Noah, at God's, command, thou preparest this ark, for the saving of thyself, by which also thou condemnest the world, and art become heir of the righteousness which is by faith, Heb. 11. 7. wherefore coming sinner be content; he that cometh to Jesus Christ believeth too that he is willing to shew mercy to, and have compassion upon him (though unworthy) that comes to him for life. And therefore thy soul lieth not only under a special invitation to come, but under a promise too of being accepted and forgiven, Matth. 11. 28.

All these particular parts and qualities of faith, are in that soul that comes to Jesus Christ for life, as is evident to any indifferent judgement.

For, will he that believeth not the testimony of Christ concerning the baseness of sin, and the insufficiency of the righteousness of the world, come to Christ for life? No.

He that believeth not the testimony of the word comes not; He that believeth that there is life any where else, comes not: He that questions whether the Father hath given Christ power to forgive, comes not: He that thinketh that there is more in sin, in the law, in death, and the devil, to destroy, than there is in Christ to save, comes not: He also that

questions

questions his faithful management of his priesthood for the salvation of sinners, comes not.

Thou then that art indeed the coming sinner, believest thou this? True, perhaps thou dost not believe with that assurance, nor hast thou leisure to take notice of thy faith as to these distinct acts of it; but yet all this faith is in him coming to Christ for life. And the faith that thus worketh, is the faith of the best and purest kind; because this man comes alone as a sinner, and as seeing that life is to be had only in Jesus Christ.

Before I conclude my answer to this objection, take into thy consideration these two things:

1st, That the cities of refuge were erected for those that were dead in the law, and that yet would live by grace, even for those that were to fly thither for life from the avenger of blood that pursueth after them. And it is worth your noting, that those that were upon their flight thither, are in a peculiar manner called the people of God. *Cast ye up, cast ye up, (saith God), prepare ye the way; take up the stumbling-block out of the way of my people, Isa. 57. 14.* This is meant of perparing the way to the city of refuge, that the slayers might escape thither; which flying slayers are here, by way of speciality, called the people of God; even those of them that escaped thither for life.

2^{dly}, Consider that of Ahab, when Benhadad sent to him for life, saying, *Thus saith thy servant Benhadad, I pray thee let me live.* Though Benhadad had sought the crown, kingdom, yea, and also the life of Ahab, yet how effectually doth Benhadad prevail with him! Is Benhadad yet alive? saith Ahab, *He is my brother; yea, go ye, bring him to me: So he made him ride in his chariot,* 1 Kings 20.

Coming sinner, what thinkest thou? If Jesus Christ had as little goodness in him as Ahab, he might grant an humble Benhadad life; thou neither beggest of him his crown and dignity; life, eternal life will serve thy turn. How much more then shalt thou have it, since thou hast to deal with him who is good-
ness

ness and mercy itself! yea, since thou art also called upon, yea, greatly encouraged by a promise of life, to come unto him for life! Read also these scriptures, Numb. 35. 11, 14, 15.; Josh. 20. 1,—6.; Heb. 6. 16,—21.

Obj. 2. When I say I only seek myself, I mean I do not find that I do design God's glory in mine own salvation by Christ, and that makes me fear I do not come aright.

Ans. Where doth Christ Jesus require such a qualification of those that are coming to him for life? Come thou for life, and trouble not thy head with such objections against thyself, and let God and Christ alone to glorify themselves in the salvation of such a worm as thou art. The Father saith to the Son, *Thou art my servant; O Israel, in whom I will be glorified.* God propoundeth life to sinners, as the argument to prevail with them to come to him for life; and Christ says plainly, *I am come that ye might have life,* John 12. 10. He hath no need of thy designs, though thou hast need of his eternal life, pardon of sin, and deliverance from wrath to come, Christ propounds to thee, and these be the things that thou hast need of: besides, God will be gracious and merciful to worthless, undeserving wretches; come then as such an one, and lay no stumbling-block in the way to him, but come to him for life, and live, John 5. 34.; chap. 10. 10.; and chap. 3. 36.; Matth. 1. 21.; Prov. 8. 36. 37.; 1 Thes. 11.; John 11. 25, 26.

When the gaoler said, *Sirs, What must I do to be saved?* Paul did not so much as once ask him, what is your end in this question; do you design the glory of God, in the salvation of your soul? He had more wit; he knew that such questions as these would have been but fools baubles, about, instead of a sufficient salve to, so weighty a question as this. Wherefore, since this poor wretch lacked salvation by Jesus Christ, I mean to be saved from hell and death, which he knew (now) was due to him for the sins that he had committed; Paul bids him, like a poor condemned sinner as he was, to proceed still in this his way

self

self-seeking, saying, *Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved*, Acts 16. 30, 31, 32. I know that afterwards thou wilt desire to glorify Christ by walking in the way of his precepts; but at present thou wantest life: the avenger of blood is behind thee, and the devil like a roaring lion is behind thee; well, come now, and obtain life from these; and when thou hast obtained some comfortable persuasion that thou art made partaker of life by Christ, then, and not till then, thou wilt say, *Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me bless his holy name. Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits; who forgiveth all thine iniquities, and healeth all thy diseases; who redeemeth thy life from destruction, and crowneth thee with loving kindness and tender mercies*, Psal. 103. 1,—6.

Obj. 3. But I cannot believe that I am come to Christ aright, because sometimes I am apt to question his very being and office to save.

Thus to do is horrible; but mayst thou not judge amiss in this matter?

How can I judge amiss, when I judge as I feel? Poor soul! Thou mayst judge amiss for all that. Why, saith the sinner, I think that these questionings come from my heart.

Ans. Let me answer: That which comes from thy heart, comes from thy will and affections, from thy understanding, judgement, and conscience, for these must acquiesce in thy questioning, if thy questioning be with thy heart. And how sayst thou, (for to name no more), dost thou with the affection and conscience thus question?

Ans. No, my conscience trembles when such thoughts comes into my mind; and my affections are otherwise inclined.

Then I conclude, that these things are either suddenly injected by the devil, or else are the fruits of that body of sin and death that yet dwells within thee, or perhaps from both together.

If they come wholly from the devil, as they seem, because thy conscience and affections are against them,

or if they come from that body of death that is in thee, (and be not thou curious in inquiring from whither of them they come, the safest way is to lay enough at thy own door), nothing of this should hinder thy coming, nor make thee conclude thou comest not aright.

And before I leave thee, let me a little query with thee about this matter.

1st, Dost thou like these wicked blasphemies?

Ans. No, no, their presence and working kills me.

2^{dly}, Dost thou mourn for them, pray against them, and hate thyself because of them?

Ans. Yes, yes; but that which afflicts me is, I do not prevail against them.

3^{dly}, Dost thou sincerely chuse (mightest thou have thy choice) that thy heart might be affected and taken with the things that are best, most heavenly, and holy?

Ans. With all my heart, and death the next hour (if it were God's will); rather than thus to sin against him.

Well then, thy not liking of them, thy mourning for them, thy praying against them, and thy loathing thyself because of them, with thy sincere chusing of those thoughts for thy delectation that are heavenly and holy, clearly declares, that these things are not countenanced either with thy will, affections, understanding, judgement, or conscience: and so, that thy heart is not in them, but that rather they come immediately from the devil, or arise from the body of death that is in thy flesh, which thou oughtest thus to say, *Now then it is no more I that doth it, but sin that dwells in me*, Rom. 7. 16, 17.

I will give thee a pertinent instance: In Deut. 22. thou mayst read of a betrothed damsel, one betrothed to her beloved, one that had given him her heart and mouth, as thou hast given thyself to Christ; yet was she met with as she walked in the field, by one that forced her, because he was stronger than she. Well, what judgement now doth God, the righteous judge, pass upon the damsel for this? *The man only that lay with her, saith God, shall die: But unto the damsel*

damsel thou shalt do nothing; there is in the damsel no sin worthy of death. For, as when a man riseth against his neighbour, and slayeth him, even so is this matter; he found her in the field, and the betrothed damsel cried, and there was none to save her, Deut. 22.

Thou art this damsel: The man that forced thee with these blasphemous thoughts, is the devil; and he lighteth upon thee in a fit place, even in the fields as thou art wandering after Jesus Christ; but thou criest out, and by thy cry did shew, that thou abhorrest such wicked lewdness. Well, the judge of all the earth will do right; he will not lay the sin at thy door, but at his that offered the violence; And for thy comfort take this into consideration, that *he comes to heal them that were oppressed with the devil, Acts 10.*

Obj. 4. But, saith another, I am so heartless, so slow, and, as I think, so indifferent in my coming, that, to speak truth, I know not whether my kind of coming ought to be called a coming to Christ.

Ans. You know that I told you at first, that coming to Christ is a moving of the heart and affections towards him.

But saith the soul, my dulness and indifferency in all holy duties, demonstrate my heartlessness in coming; and to come, and not with the heart, signifies nothing at all.

Ans. The moving of the heart after Christ, is not to be discerned (at all times) by thy sensible affectionate performance of duties, but rather by those secret groanings and complaints which thy soul makes to God against that sloth that attends thee in duties.

2dly, But grant it be even as thou sayst it is, that thou comest so slowly, &c. yet since Christ bids them come that come not at all, surely they may be accepted that come, though attended with those infirmities, which thou at present groanest under. He saith, *And him that cometh*; he saith not, *If they come sensible, so fast*; but, *And him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out.* He saith also, in the 8th of Proverbs, *As for him that wanteth understanding, that is, an heart; for oftentimes the under-*

standing is taken for the heart: *Come eat of my bread, and drink of the wine that I have mingled.*

3dly, Thou mayst be vehement in thy spirit in coming to Jesus Christ, and yet be plagued with sensible sloth; so was the church, when she cried, *Draw me, we run after thee;* and Paul, when he said, *When I would do good, evil is present with me,* Song. 14. Rom. 7.; Gal. 5. 19. The works, strugglings, and oppositions of the flesh, are more manifest than are the works of the Spirit in our hearts, and so are sooner felt than they. What then? Let us not be discouraged at the sight and feeling of our own infirmities, but run the faster to Jesus Christ for salvation.

4thly, Get thy heart warmed with the sweet promise of Christ's acceptance of the coming sinner, and that will make thee more haste unto him. Discouraging thoughts, they are like unto cold weather, they benumb the senses, and makes us go ungainly about our business; but the sweet and warm gleads of promise, are like the comfortable beams of the sun, which enliveneth and refresheth. You see how little the bee and the fly do play in the air in winter; why, the cold hinders them from doing it; but when the wind and sun is warm, who is so busy as they?

5thly, But again, he that comes to Christ, flies for his life. Now, there is no man that flies for his life, that thinks he speeds fast enough on his journey no, could he, he would willingly take a mile at a step. Oh my sloth and heartlessness, sayest thou! *Oh that I had wings like a dove, for then would I flee away and be at rest! I would hasten my escape from the windy storm and tempest,* Psal. 54. 6, 8.

Poor coming soul, thou art like the man that would ride full gallop, whose horse will hardly trot! Now, the desire of his mind is not to be judged of by the slow pace of the dull jade he rides on, but by the hitching, and kicking and spurring, as he sits on his back. Thy flesh is like this dull jade; it will not gallop after Christ; it will be backward, though thy soul and heaven lie at stake. But be of good comfort: Christ judgeth not according to the fierceness of

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Come, and welcome, to Jesus Christ.

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of outward motion, Mark 10. 17. but according to the sincerity of the heart and inward parts, John 1. 47.; Psalm 51. 6.; Matth. 16. 41.

6thly, Ziba in appearance came to David much faster than did Mephibosheth; but yet his heart was not so upright in him to David as was his. It is true, Mephibosheth had a check from David; for said he, *Why wentest not thou with me, Mephibosheth?* But when David came to remember that Mephibosheth was lame, (for that was his plea), *thy servant is lame*, 2 Sam. 19. he was content, and concluded, he would have come after him faster than he did; and Mephibosheth appealed to David, who was in those days as an angel of God, to know all things that are done in the earth, if he did not believe that the reason of his backwardness lay in his lameness, and not in his mind. Why, poor coming sinner, thou canst not come to Christ with that outward swiftness of career as many others do; but doth the reason of thy backwardness lie in thy mind and will, or in the sluggishness of the flesh? canst thou say sincerely, *The spirit truly is willing, but the flesh is weak*, Matth. 26. 41. Yea, canst thou appeal to the Lord Jesus, who knoweth perfectly the very inmost thought of thy heart, that this is true? Then take this for thy comfort, he hath said, *I will assemble her that halteth, I will make her that halteth a remnant, and I will save her that halteth*, Micah 4. 6, 7.; Zeph. 3. 19. What canst thou have more from the sweet lips of the Son of God? But,

7thly, I read of some that are to follow Christ in chains; I say, to come after him in chains: *Thus saith the Lord, the labour of Egypt, and the merchandise of Ethiopia, and the Sabeans, men of stature, shall come over unto thee, and they shall be thine: They shall come after thee: In chains shall they come over, and they shall fall down unto thee: They shall make supplication unto thee, saying, Surely there is none else to save*, Isa. 45. 14. Surely they that come after Christ in chains, come to him in great difficulty, because their steps by the chains are straitened.

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And what chain so heavy, as those that discourage thee? Thy chain, which is made up of guilt and filth, is heavy, it is a wretched band about thy neck, by which thy strength doth fail, Lam. 1. 14.; chap. 3. 17. But come, though thou comest in chains, it is glory to Christ that a sinner comes after him in chains. The chinking of thy chains, though troublesome to thee, are not, nor can be obstruction to thy salvation; it is Christ's work and glory to save thee from thy chains, to enlarge thy steps, and set thee at liberty. The blind man, though called, surely could not come apace to Jesus Christ, but Christ could stand still, and stay for him. True, *He rideth upon the wings of the wind*; but yet he is long-suffering, and his long-suffering is salvation to him that cometh to him, Matth. 19. 49.; 2 Pet. 3. 9.

8thly, Hadst thou seen those that came to the Lord Jesus in the days of his flesh, how slowly, how hobblingly, they came to him, by reason of their infirmities; and also how friendly, and kindly, and graciously, he received them, and gave them the desire of their hearts, thou wouldst not, as thou dost, make such objections against thyself, in thy coming to Jesus Christ.

Obj. 5. But (says another) I fear I come too late; I doubt I have staid too long: I am afraid the door is shut.

Ans. Thou canst never come too late to Jesus Christ, if thou dost come. This is manifest by two instances.

1st, By the man that came to him at the eleventh hour. This man was idle all the day long: He had a whole gospel-day to come in, and he played it all away save only the last hour thereof; But at last, at the eleventh hour, he came, and goes into the vineyard to work with the rest of his labourers, that had borne the burden and heat of the day. Well, but how was he received by the lord of the vineyard? Why, when pay-day came, he had even as much as the rest; yea, had money first. True, the others murmured at him; but what did the Lord Jesus answer them? *Is thine eye evil because mine is good*

I will give unto this last even as unto thee, Matt. 20.

2dly, The other instance is, the thief upon the cross; He came late also, even as at an hour before his death, yea, he strayed from Jesus Christ as long as he had liberty to be a thief, and longer too; for could he have deluded the judge, and by lying words escaped his just condemnation, for ought I know, he had not come as yet to his Saviour; but being convicted, and condemned to die, yea, fastened to the cross, that he might die like a rogue, as he was in his life; behold the Lord Jesus, when this wicked one, even now, desireth mercy at his hands, tells him, and that without the least reflection upon him, for his former mispent life, *To-day thou shalt be with me in paradise, Luke 23. 43.*

Let no man turn the grace of God into wantonness. My design is now to encourage the coming soul.

Obj. But is not the door of mercy shut against some before they die?

Ans. Yea: and God forbids that prayers should be made to him for them, Jer. 7. 16.; Jude 22.

Quest. Then, why may not I doubt that I may be one of these?

Ans. By no means, if thou art coming to Jesus Christ; because when God shuts the door upon men, he gives them no heart to come to Jesus Christ. *None come but those to whom it is given of the Father.* But thou comest, therefore it is given to thee of the Father.

Be sure, therefore, if the Father hath given thee an heart to come to Jesus Christ, the gate of mercy yet stands open to thee: For it stands not with the wisdom of God to give strength to come to the birth, and yet to shut up the womb, Isa. 66. 9.; to give grace to come to Jesus Christ, and yet shut up the door of his mercy upon thee. *Incline thine ear, saith he, and come unto me. Hear, and your souls shall live, and I will make an everlasting covenant with you, even the sure mercies of David, Isa. 55. 3.*

Obj. But it is said, that some knocked when the door was shut?

Ans.

Come, and welcome, to Jesus Christ.

Ans. Yes; but the texts in which these knockers are mentioned, are to be referred unto the day of judgement, and not to the coming of the sinner to Christ in this life: See the texts, Matth. 25. 11.; Luke 13. 24, 25.

These therefore concern thee nothing at all; thou art coming to Jesus Christ, thou art coming *now*! *Now is the acceptable time, behold now is the day of salvation.* 2 Cor. 6. 2. Now God is upon the mercy-seat; now Christ Jesus sits by, continually pleading the victory of his blood for sinners; and now, even as long as this world lasts, this word of the text shall still be free, and fully fulfilled; *And him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out.*

Sinner, the greater sinner thou art, the greater need of mercy thou hast, and the more will Christ be glorified thereby: Come then, come and try: Come taste and see how good the Lord is to an undeserving sinner.

Obj. 6. But (says another) I am fallen since I began to come to Christ; therefore I fear I did not come aright, and so consequently that Christ will not receive me.

Ans. Falls are dangerous; for they dishonour Christ, wound the conscience, and cause the enemies of God to speak reproachfully. But it is no good argument, I am fallen, therefore I was not coming aright to Jesus Christ. If David, and Solomon, and Peter, had thus objected against themselves, they had added to their griefs; and yet, at least as much cause as thou. A man whose steps are ordered by the Lord, and whose goings the Lord delights in, may yet be overtaken with a temptation that may cause him to fall, Psal. 37. 23, 24. Did not Aaron fall; yea, and Moses himself? What shall we say of Hezekiah and Jehosaphat? There are therefore falls and falls; falls pardonable, and falls unpardonable: Falls unpardonable are falls against light, from the faith, to the despising of, and trampling upon Jesus Christ and his blessed undertakings, Heb. 6. 2, 3, 4, 5; chap. 10. 28, 29. Now, as for such, there re-
remains

mains no more sacrifice for sin: Indeed they have no heart, no mind, no desire to come to Jesus Christ for life; therefore they must perish: Nay, says the Holy Ghost, *It is impossible that they should be renewed again unto repentance.* Therefore these God hath no compassion for, neither ought we; but for other falls, though they be dreadful, (and God will chastise his people for them), they do not prove thee a graceless man, one not come to Jesus Christ for life.

It is said of the child in the gospel, that *while he was yet a-coming, the devil threw him down, and tore him,* Luke 9. 4.

Dejected sinner, it is no wonder that thou hast caught a fall in coming to Jesus Christ: Is it not rather to be wondered at, that thou hast not caught before this, a thousand times a thousand falls? considering,

1st, What fools we are by nature.

2^{dly}, What weaknesses are in us.

3^{dly}, What mighty powers the fallen angels, our implacable enemies, are.

4^{thly}, Considering also how often the coming man is benighted in his journey; and also what stumbling-blocks do lie in his way.

5^{thly}, Also his familiars (that were so before) now watch for his halting, and seek by what means they may to cause him to fall by the hand of their strong ones.

What then? Must we, because of these temptations, incline to fall? No. Must we not fear falls? Yes. *Let him that thinketh he standeth, take heed lest he fall,* 1 Cor. 10. 12.; yet let him not utterly be cast down; *The Lord upholdeth all that fall, and raiseth up these that are bowed down.* Make not light of falls; yet hast thou fallen? *Ye have,* said Samuel, *done all this wickedness;* yet turn not aside from following the Lord, but serve him with a perfect heart, and turn not aside, for the Lord will not forsake his people, (and he counted the coming sinner one of them), *because it hath pleased the Lord to make you his people,* 1 Sam. 12. 20, 21, 22.

Shall come to me.—Now we come to shew what force there is in this promise to make them come to him. *All that the Father giveth me, shall come to me.*

I will speak to this promise,

First, In general.

Secondly, In particular.

In general. This word *shall* is confined to these, *all*, that are given to Christ: *All that the Father giveth me, shall come to me.* Hence I conclude,

1. That coming to Jesus Christ aright is an effect of their being (of God) given to Christ before, Mark, *They shall come: Who? Those that are given. They come then, because they were given: Thine they were, and thou gavest them me.* Now, this is indeed a singular comfort to them that are a-coming in truth to Christ, to think that the reason why they come, is, because they were given of the Father before to him. Thus then may the coming soul reason with himself as he comes: *Am I coming indeed to Jesus Christ? This coming of mine is not to be attributed to me or my goodness, but to the grace and gift of God to Christ. God gave first my person to him, and therefore hath now given me a heart to come.*

2. This word, *shall come*, maketh thy coming, not only the fruit of the gift of the Father, but also of the purpose of the Son; for these words are a divine purpose; they shew us the heavenly determination of the Son. *The Father hath given them to me, and they shall; yea, they shall come to me.* Christ is as full in his resolution to save those given to him, as is the Father in giving of them. Christ prized the gift of his Father, he will lose nothing of it; he is resolved to save it every whit by his blood, and to raise it up again at the last day; and thus he fulfils his Father's will, and accomplisheth his own desires, John 6. 39.

3. These words, *shall come*, make thy coming to be also the effect of an absolute promise; coming sinner, thou art concluded in a promise: thy coming is the fruit of the faithfulness of an absolute promise. It was this promise, by the virtue of which thou at
first

first receivedst strength to come : And this is the promise, by the virtue of which thou shalt be effectually brought to him. It was said to Abraham, *At this time I will come, and Sarah shall have a son.* This son was Isaac. Mark ! Sarah shall *have a son* ; there is the promise : And Sarah had a son ; there was the fulfilling of the promise ; and therefore was Isaac called the *child of the promise*, Gen. 17. 19. ; chap. 18. 10. ; Rom. 9. 9.

Sarah shall *have a son* : But how if Sarah be past age ? Why still the promise continues to say, Sarah shall *have a son* : But how if Sarah be barren ? Why still the promise says, Sarah shall *have a son*. But Abraham's body is now dead ? Why the promise is still the same, Sarah shall *have a son*. Thus you see what virtue there is in an absolute promise ; it carrieth enough in its own bowels to accomplish the thing promised, whether there be means or no in us to effect it. Wherefore this promise in the text, being an absolute promise, by virtue of it, not by virtue of ourselves, or by our own inducements, do we come to Jesus Christ, for so are the words of the text ; *All that the Father giveth me, shall come to me.*

Therefore is every sincere comer to Jesus Christ called also a child of the promise. *Now we, brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of the promise*, Gal. 4. 28. ; that is, we are the children that God hath promised to Jesus Christ, and given to him ; yea, the children that Jesus Christ hath promised shall come to him. *All that the Father giveth me shall come.*

4. This word, *shall come*, engageth Christ to communicate all manner of grace to those thus given him to make them effectually come to him. *They shall come* ; that is, not if they will, but if grace, all grace, if power, wisdom, a new heart, and the Holy Spirit, and all joining together, can make them come. I say, this word, *shall come*, being absolute, hath no dependence upon our own will or power, or goodness ; but it engageth for us even God himself, Christ himself, the Spirit himself. When God had made the absolute promise to Abraham, *That Sarah should have*

a son, Abraham did not at all look at any qualifications in himself, because the promise looked at none; but as God had by the promise absolutely promised him a son; so he considered now not his own body now dead, nor yet the barrenness of Sarah's womb. He staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief, but was strong in faith giving glory to God, being fully persuaded that what he had promised he was able to perform, Rom. 4. He had promised, and had promised absolutely, Sarah shall have a son: Therefore Abraham looks that he, to wit God, must fulfil the condition of it. Neither is this expectation of Abraham disapproved by the Holy Ghost, but accounted good and laudable; it being that by which he gives glory to God. The Father also hath given to Christ a certain number of souls for him to save; and he himself hath said, *They shall come to him*. Let the church of God then live in a joyful expectation of the utmost accomplishment of this promise; for assuredly it shall be fulfilled, and not one thousandth part of a tittle thereof shall fail: *They shall come to me*.

And now, before I go any farther, I will more particularly inquire into the nature of an absolute promise.

1. We call that an absolute promise that is made without any condition: or more fully thus: That is an absolute promise of God, or of Christ, which maketh over to this or that man any saving spiritual blessing, without a condition to be done on our part for the obtaining thereof. And this we have in hand is such an one. Let the best master of arts on earth shew me, if he can, any condition in this text depending upon any qualification in us, which is not by the same promise concluded, shall be by the Lord Jesus effected in us.

2. An absolute promise therefore is, as we say, without if or and; that is, it requireth nothing of us, that itself might be accomplished. It saith not, *they shall*, if they will; but *they shall*: not *they shall*, if they use the means; but, *they shall*. You may say, that

a will, and the use of the means is supposed, though not expressed. But I answer, No, by no means; that is as a condition of this promise: If they be at all included in the promise, they are included there as the fruit of the absolute promise, not as if it expected the qualification to arise from us. *Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power*, Psal. 110. 3. That is another absolute promise: But doth that promise suppose a willingness in us, as a condition of God's making us willing? They shall be willing, if they are willing; or, they shall be willing, if they will be willing. This is ridiculous; there is nothing of this supposed. The promise is absolute as to us; all that it engageth for its own accomplishment is, the mighty power of Christ, and his faithfulness to accomplish.

The difference therefore betwixt the absolute and conditional promise is this:

1. They differ in their terms. The absolute promises say, I will, and you shall: The other, I will if you will; or, do this, and thou shalt live, Jer. 31. 32, 34.; Ezek. 34. 24,---34.; Heb. 8. 7,---12. Jer. 4. 1.; Ezek. 18. 30, 31, 32.; Mat. 19. 21.

2. They differ in their way of communicating of good things to men; the absolute ones communicate things freely, only of grace; the other, if there be that qualification in us, that the promise calls for, not else.

3. The absolute promises therefore engage God, the other engage us; I mean God only, us only.

4. Absolute promises must be fulfilled; conditional may, or may not be fulfilled. The absolute ones must be fulfilled, because of the faithfulness of God, the other may not, because of the unfaithfulness of men.

5. Absolute promises have therefore a sufficiency in themselves to bring about their own fulfilling; the conditional have not so. The absolute promise is therefore a big-bellied promise, because it hath in itself a fulness of all desired things for us; and will, when the time of that promise is come, yield to us mortals that which will verily save us; yea, and make us capable of answering of the demands of the promise that is conditional.

conditional. Wherefore, though there be a real, yea, an eternal difference in these things (with others) betwixt the conditional and the absolute promise; yet again, in other respects, there is a blessed harmony betwixt them; as may be seen in these particulars.

1. The conditional promise calls for repentance, the absolute promise gives it, Acts 5. 30, 31.

2. The conditional promise calls for faith, the absolute promise gives it, Zeph. 3. 12.; Rom. 15. 12.

3. The conditional promise calls for a new heart, the absolute promise gives it, Ezek. 36.

4. The conditional promise calleth for holy obedience, the absolute promise giveth it, or causeth it, Ezek. 36. 27.

And as they harmoniously agree in this, so again the conditional promise blesteth the man who by the absolute promise is endued with its fruit: As for instance:

1. The absolute promise maketh men upright; and then the conditional follows, saying, *Blessed are the undefiled in way, who walk in the way of the Lord*, Psal. 119. 1.

2. The absolute promise giveth to this man the fear of the Lord; and then the conditional followeth, saying, *Blessed is every one that feareth the Lord*, Psal. 128. 1.

3. The absolute promise giveth faith, and then this conditional follows, saying, *Blessed is he that believeth*, Zeph. 3. 12.; Luke 1. 45.

4. The absolute promise brings free forgiveness of sins; and then says the conditional, *Blessed are they whose transgressions are forgiven, and whose sin is covered*, Rom. 4. 7, 8.

5. The absolute promise says, That God's elect should hold out to the end; then the conditional follows with his blessings, *He that shall endure to the end, the same shall be saved*, 1 Pet. 1. 4, 5, 6.; Matth. 24.

Thus do the promises gloriously serve one another and us, in this their harmonious agreement.

Now the promise under consideration, is an absolute promise:

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promise: *All that the Father giveth me, shall come to me.*

This promise therefore is, as is said, a big-bellied promise, and hath in itself all those things to bestow upon us that the conditional calleth for at our hands. They shall come! Shall they come? Yes, they shall come! But how, if they want those things, those graces, power, and heart, without which they cannot come? Why, *Shall-come* answereth all this, and all things else that may in this matter be objected. And here I will take the liberty to amplify things.

Objection 1. But they are dead, dead in trespasses and sins, how shall they then come?

Ans. Why, *Shall-come* can raise them from this death: *The hour is coming, and now is, that the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that hear shall live.* Thus therefore is this impediment by *Shall-come* removed out of the way. They shall heal, they shall live.

Obj. But they are Satan's captives; he takes them captives at his will, and he is stronger than they: how then can they come?

Ans. Why, *Shall-come* hath also provided an help for this. Satan hath bound that daughter of Abraham so, that she could by no means lift up herself; but yet *Shall-come* set her free both in body and soul. Christ will have them turned from the power of Satan to God. But what! Must it be, if they turn themselves, or do somewhat to merit of him to turn them? No, he will do it freely, of his own goodwill. Alas! Man, whose soul is possessed by the devil, is turned whithersoever that governour listeth, is taken captive by him, notwithstanding its natural powers, at his will; but what will he do? Will he hold him when *Shall-come* puts forth itself (will he then let him) for coming to Jesus Christ? No, that cannot be! His power is but the power of a fallen angel, but *Shall-come* is the word of God: Therefore *Shall-come* must be fulfilled; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against him.

There were seven devils in Mary Magdalen, too many.

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many for her to get from under the power of: but when the time was come, that *Shall-come* was to be fulfilled upon her, they gave place, fly from her, and she comes (indeed) to Jesus Christ, according as it is written: *All that the Father giveth me, shall come to me.*

The man that was possessed with a legion, Mark 5. was too much by them captivated, for him by humane force to come; yea, had he had (to boot) all the men under heaven to help him, had he said, He shall come, with-held his mighty power; but when this promise was to be fulfilled upon him, then he comes; nor could all their power hinder his coming. It was also this (*Shall-come*) that preserved him from death; when by these evil spirits he was hurled hither and thither; and it was by the virtue of *Shall-come* that at last he was set at liberty from them, and enabled indeed to come to Christ. *All that the Father giveth me shall come to me.*

Obj. 3. They shall (you say); but how if they will not; and if so, then what can *Shall-come* do?

Ans. True, there are some men say, *We are lords, we will come no more under thee*, Jer. 51. 31. But as God says in another case, (if they are concerned in *Shall-come* to me), *They shall know whose words shall stand, mine or theirs*, Jer. 41. 28. Here then is the case, we must now see who will be the liar; he that saith, I will not, or he that saith, He shall come to me. You shall come, says God; I will not come, saith the sinner. Now as sure as he is concerned in this *Shall-come*, God will make that man eat his own words; for I will not, is the unadvised conclusion of a crazy-headed sinner; but *Shall-come* was spoken by him that is of power to perform his word. *Son, go work to-day in my vineyard*, said the Father: But he answered, and said, I will not come. What now? will he be able to stand to his refusal? will he pursue his desperate denial? No, *he afterwards repented and went*. But how came he by that repentance? Why, it was wrapped up for him in the absolute promise; and therefore notwithstanding he said, I will not,
 he

he afterwards repented and went. By this parable Jesus Christ sets forth the obstinacy of the sinners of the world, as touching their coming to him; they will not come, though threatened; yea, though life be offered them upon condition of coming.

But now, when *Shall-come*, the absolute promise of God, comes to be fulfilled upon them, then they come; because by that promise, a cure is provided against the rebellion of their will: *Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power*, Psal. 110. 3. Thy people, what people? Why, the people that the Father hath given thee. The obstinacy and plague that is in the will of that people, shall be taken away: And they shall be made willing; *Shall-come* will make them willing to come to thee.

He that had seen Paul in the midst of his outrages against Christ, his gospel, and people, would hardly have thought that he would ever have been a follower of Jesus Christ, especially since he went not against his conscience in his persecuting of them. He thought verily that he ought to do what he did. But we may see what *Shall-come* can do, when it comes to be fulfilled upon the soul of a rebellious sinner; he was a chosen vessel, given by the Father to the Son; and now the time being come that *Shall-come* was to take him in hand, behold he is over-mastered, astonished, and with trembling and reverence, in a moment becomes willing to be obedient to the heavenly call, Acts 9.

And were not they far gone (that you read of, Acts 2.) who had their hands and hearts in the murder of the Son of God: and to shew their resolvedness never to repent of that horrid fact, said, *His blood be on us and our children*. But must their obstinacy rule? Must they be bound to their own ruin, by the rebellion of their stubborn wills? No, not *those* of *these* the Father gave to Christ; wherefore, at the times appointed, *Shall-come* breaks in among them: the absolute promise takes them in hand; and then they come indeed, crying out to Peter, and the rest of the apostles, *Men and brethren, what shall we do?* No stubbornness of mens will can stand, when God hath ab-

folutely said the contrary; *Shall-come* can make them come as doves to their windows, that had afore resolved never to come to him.

The Lord spake unto Manasseh, and to his people, (by the prophets); but would he hear? No, he would not: But shall Manasseh come off thus? No, he *shall not*. Therefore, he being also one of those whom the Father hath given to the Son, and so falling within the bounds and reach of *Shall-come*; at last *Shall-come* takes him in hand, and then he comes indeed. He comes bowing and bending; he humbles himself greatly, and made supplication to the Lord, and prayed unto him; and he was entreated of him, and had mercy upon him, 2 Chron. 3. 33.

The thief upon the cross, at first, did rail with his fellow upon Jesus Christ; but he was one that the Father had given to him, and therefore, *Shall-come* must handle him and his rebellious will. And behold, so soon as he is dealt withal, by virtue of that absolute promise, how soon he buckleth, leaves his railing, falls to supplicating of the Son of God for mercy; Lord, saith he, *Remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom*, Matth. 27. 44.; Luke 23. 40.

Obj. 4. They come, say you, but how if they be blind, and see not the way? For some are kept off from Christ, not only by the obstinacy of their will, but by the blindness of their mind: Now, if they be blind, how shall they come?

Ans. The question is not, Are they blind? But are they within the reach and power of *Shall-come*, If so, that Christ that said, *they shall come*, will find them eyes, or a guide, or both, to bring them to himself. *Must is for the king*. If they shall come, they shall come: No impediment shall hinder.

The Thessalonians darkness did not hinder them from being the children of light; *I am come*, saith Christ, *that they that see not might see*. And if he saith, *See ye blind that have eyes*; Who shall hinder it? Eph. 5. 8.; John 9. 39.; II. 39. 18.; chap. 43. 8.

This promise therefore is, as I said, a big-bellied promise, having in the bowels of it, all things that shall

shall occur to the complete fulfilling of itself, *They shall come.* But it is objected, that they are blind: Well, *Shall-come* is still the same, and continueth to say, *They shall come to me.* Therefore he saith again, *I will bring the blind by a way that they know not, I will lead them in paths that they know not. I will make darkness light before them, and crooked things straight; these things will I do unto them, and not forsake them, Isa. 42. 16.*

Mark, I will bring them, though they be blind; I will bring them by a way they know not: I will, I will; and therefore *they shall come to me.*

Obj. 5. But how, if they have exceeded many in sin, and so made themselves, far more abominable? They are the ring-leading sinners in the country, the town, or family.

Ans. What then? Shall that hinder the execution of *Shall-come*? It is not transgressions, nor sins, nor all their transgression in all their sins, (if they by the Father are given to Christ to save them), that shall hinder this promise, that it should not be fulfilled upon them, *In those days, and at that time, saith the Lord, the iniquities of Israel shall be sought for, and there shall be none; and the sins of Judah, and they shall not be found, Jer. 32. 30.* Not that they had none, (for they abounded in transgression, 2 Chron. 33. 9; Ezek. 16. 48.), but God would pardon, cover, hide, and put them away, by virtue of his absolute promise, by which they are given to Christ to save them. *And I will cleanse them from all their iniquity, whereby they have sinned against me; and I will pardon all their iniquity, whereby they have transgressed against me. And it shall be to me for a name of joy, a praise, and an honour before all the nations of the earth, which shall hear of all the good I do unto them; and they shall fear and tremble for all the goodness and all the prosperity that I procure in it, Jer. 33. 8.*

Obj. 6. But how if they have not faith and repentance? How shall they come then?

Ans. Why, he that saith, *They shall-come,* shall he not make it good? If they shall come, they shall

come; and he that hath said, they shall come, if faith and repentance, be the way to come, as indeed they are, then faith and repentance shall be given to them; for *shall-come* must be fulfilled on them.

1. Faith shall be given them: *I will also leave in the midst of thee an afflicted and poor people, and they shall trust in the name of the Lord. There shall be a root of Jesse, and he shall rise to reign over the Gentiles; and in him shall the Gentiles trust,* Zeph. 3. 12.

2. They shall have repentance: He is exalted to give repentance: *They shall come weeping, and seeking the Lord their God. And again, with weeping and supplication will I lead them,* Acts 5. 30. Jer. 31. 9.

I told you before, that an absolute promise hath all conditional ones in the belly of it, and also provision to answer all those qualifications, that they propound to him that seeketh for their benefit: And it must be so; for if *Shall-come* be an absolute promise, as indeed it is, then it must be fulfilled; upon every of those concerned therein. I say, it must be fulfilled, if God can by grace, and his absolute will, fulfil it. Besides, since coming and believing is all one, (according to John 6. 35.), *He that cometh to me shall never hunger, and he that believeth in me shall never thirst.*

Then, when he saith, they *Shall-come*, it is as much as to say, they *shall believe*, and consequently repent to the saving of the soul. So then the present want of faith and repentance cannot make the promise of God of none effect; because that this promise hath in it to give, what others call for and expect. I will give them an heart, I will give them my Spirit, I will give them repentance, I will give them faith.

Mark these words; *If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature.* But how came he to be a new creature, since none can create but God? Why, God indeed doth make them *new creatures*. Behold, saith he, *I make all things new.* And hence it follows even after he had said, they are *new creatures*; and all things are of God; that is, all these new creatures stand in the several operations, and special workings of

of the Spirit of grace, who is God, 2 Cor. 5. 17, 18.

Obj. 7. But how shall they escape all those dangerous and damnable opinions, that like rocks and quicksands are in the way in which they are going?

Ans. Indeed this age is an age of errors, if ever there was an age of errors in the world; but yet the gift of the Father, laid claim to by the Son in the text, must needs escape them, and in conclusion come to him. There are a company of *shall comes* in the Bible that doth secure them; not but that they may be assaulted by them; yea, and also for the time intangled and detained by them from the bishop of their souls; but these *shall comes* will break those chains and fetters, that those given to Christ are intangled in, and they *shall come*, because he hath said they shall come to him.

Indeed, errors are like that whore of whom you read in the Proverbs, that sitteth in her seat in the high places of the city, *to call passengers who go right on their way*, Prov. 9. 13,—16. But the persons, as I said, that by the Father are given to the Son to save them, are fit one time or other, secured by *shall come to me*.

And therefore, of such it is said, God will guide them with his eye, with his counsel, by his Spirit, and that in the way of peace, by the springs of water, and into all truth, Psal. 32. 8.; Psal. 73. 24.; John 16. 13.; Luke 1. 79.; Isa. 47. 10. So then he that hath such a guide, (and all that the Father giveth to Christ shall have it), he shall escape those dangers, he shall not err in the way; yea, though he be a fool, he shall not err therein, (Isa. 35.) for of every such an one it is said, *Thine ears shall hear a word behind thee, saying, This is the way, walk in it, when ye turn to the right hand, and when ye turn to the left*, Isa. 30. 21.

There were thieves and robbers before Christ's coming, as there are also now; but, saith he, *The sheep did not hear them*.

And why did they not hear them, but because they were under the power of *shall come*, that absolute promise,

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promise, that had that grace in itself to bestow upon them, as could make them able rightly to distinguish of voices, *My sheep hear my voice*. But how came they to hear it? Why, to them it is given to know and to hear, and that distinguishingly, John 10. 8, 16.; chap. 5. 25.; Eph. 5. 14.

Further, The very plain sentence of the text makes provision against all these things; for, saith it, *All that the Father giveth me, shall come to me*; that is, shall not be stopped, or be allured to take up any where short of me, nor shall they turn aside, to abide with any besides me.

Shall come to me.—To me. By these words there is further insinuated (though not expressed) a double cause of their coming to him.

1. There is in Christ a fulness of all-sufficiency of that, even of all that which is needful to make us happy.

2. Those that indeed come to him, do therefore come to him that they may receive it at his hand.

For the first of these, there is in Christ a fulness of all-sufficiency of all that, even of all that which is needful to make us happy. Hence it is said, *For it pleased the Father, that in him should all fulness dwell*. And again, *Of his fulness, all we have received, and grace for grace*, Col. 1. 19.; John 1. 16. It is also said of him, that his riches are unsearchable, *the unsearchable riches of Christ*, Eph. 3. 8. Hear what he saith of himself, *Riches and honour are with me, even durable riches and righteousness: My fruit is better than gold, yea, than fine gold, and my revenue than choice silver: I lead in the way of righteousness, in the midst of the paths of judgement, that I may cause them that love me to inherit substance. And I will fill their treasures*, Prov. 18. 19,—21.

This in general: But, more particularly,

1. There is that light in Christ that is sufficient to lead them out of, and from all that darkness, in the midst of which all others, but them that come to him, stumble, and fall, and perish: *I am the light of the world*, saith he, *he that followeth me, shall*

not

not abide in darkness, but shall have the light of life, John 8. 12. Man by nature is in darkness, and walketh in darkness, and knows not whither he goes, for darkness hath blinded his eyes; neither can any thing but Jesus Christ lead men out of this darkness. Natural conscience cannot do it; the ten commandments, though in the hearts of men, cannot do it: This prerogative belongs only to Jesus Christ.

2. There is life in Christ, that is to be found nowhere else, John 5. 40.: life, as a principle in the soul, by which it shall be acted and enabled to do that which through him is pleasing to God. *He that believeth in (or cometh to) me, saith he, as the scriptures have said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water, John 7. 38.* Without this life a man is dead, whether he be bad, or whether he be good; that is, good in his own and other mens esteem. There is no true and eternal life, but what is in the Me that speaketh in the text.

There is also life for those that come to him, to be had by faith in his flesh and blood. *He that eateth me, shall live by me, John 6. 57.*

And this is a life against that death that comes by the guilt of sin, and the curse of the law, under which all men are, and for ever must be, unless they eat Me, that speaks in the text. *Who so findeth Me, saith he, findeth life; deliverance from the everlasting death and destruction, that without me, he shall be devoured by, Prov. 8.*

Nothing is more desirable than life, to him that hath in himself the sentence of condemnation; and here only is life to be found. This life, to wit, eternal life, this life is in his Son; that is, in him that saith in the text, *All that the Father hath given me, shall come to me, 1 John 5. 10.*

3. The person speaking in the text, is he alone by whom poor sinners have admittance to, and acceptance with the Father, because of the glory of his righteousness, by and in which he presenteth them amiable and spotless in his sight; neither is there any way besides him, so to come to the Father; *I am the way,*

way, says he, *the truth and the life*; no man cometh to the Father, but by me, John 14. 6. All other ways to God are dead and damnable; the destroying cherubims stand with flaming swords, turning every way to keep all others from his presence, Gen. 3. 24. I say, all others but them that come by him.

I am the door; by me, saith he, if any man enter in, he shall be saved, John 10. 1, 2.

The person speaking in the text, is he, and only he, that can give stable and everlasting peace; therefore, saith he, *My peace I give unto you*. My peace, which is a peace with God, peace of conscience, and that of an everlasting duration. My peace, peace that cannot be matched, *not as the world giveth, give I unto you*; for the world's peace is but carnal and transitory, but mine is divine and eternal. Hence it is called the peace of God, that passeth all understanding.

4. The person speaking in the text, hath enough of all things truly spiritually good, to satisfy the desire of every longing soul. And Jesus stood, and cried, saying, *If any man thirst, let him come to me and drink. And to him that is athirst, I will give of the fountain of the water of life freely*, John 7. 37. Rev. 21. 6.

5. With the person speaking in the text is power to perfect, and defend, and deliver those that come to him for safe-guard. *All power*, saith he, *in heaven and earth are given unto me*, Matth. 28. 18.

Thus might I multiply instances in this nature in abundance. But,

Secondly, They that in truth do come to him, do therefore come to him that they may receive it at his hand. They come for light, they come for life, they come for reconciliation with God; they also come for peace, they come that their souls may be satisfied with spiritual good, and that they may be protected by him against all spiritual and eternal damnation; and he alone is able to give them all this, to the fulfilling of their joy to the full, as they also find when they come to him.

This is evident,

1. From the plain declaration of those that already are come to him. *Being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom also we have access with boldness into this grace, wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God, Rom. 5.*

2. It is evident also, in that while they keep their eyes upon him, they never desire to change him for another, or to add to themselves some other thing, together with him, to make up their spiritual joy. God forbid, said Paul, that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ. Yea, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ, and be found in him: not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith, Phil. 3. 7, 8, 9.

It is evident also, by their earnest desires that others might be made partakers of their blessedness. Brethren, said Paul, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel, is, that they might be saved; that is, that way that he expected to be saved himself; As he saith also to the Galatians, Brethren, saith he, I beseech you, be as I am, for I am as ye are; that is, I am a sinner as ye are. Now, I beseech you, seek for life, as I am seeking of it; as who should say, For there is a sufficiency in the Lord Jesus both for me and you.

4. It is evident also, by the triumph that such men make over all their enemies, both bodily and ghostly: Now thanks be to God, said Paul, who causeth us always to triumph in Jesus Christ. And who shall separate us from the love of Christ our Lord; and again, O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law; but thanks be to God, who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ, 2 Cor. 2. 14.; Rom. 8. 35.; 1 Cor. 15. 55, 56.

5. It is evident also, for that they are made by the glory of that which they have found in him, to suffer and endure what the devil and hell itself hath or could invent, as a means to separate them from him. Again, *Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? (as it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long, we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter).* Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors, through him that loved us: For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus, Rom. 8.

Shall come to me. O the heart-attracting glory that is in Jesus Christ, (when he is discovered), to draw those to him that are given to him of the Father: Therefore those that came of old, rendered this as the cause of their coming to him. *And we beheld the glory, as of the only begotten of the Father, John 1. 14.* And the reason why others come not, but perish in their sins, is for want of a sight of his glory. "If our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost, in whom the God of this world hath blinded the minds of them that believe not, lest the glorious light of the gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them," 2 Cor. 4.

There is therefore heart-pulsing glory in Jesus Christ, which when discovered, draws the men to him; wherefore by *shall come to me*, Christ may mean, when his glory is discovered, then they must come, then they shall come to me. Therefore, as the true comers come with weeping and relenting, as being sensible of their own vileness; so again it is said, *That the ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion, with singing, and everlasting joy upon their heads, they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall fly away; that is, at the sight of the glory of that grace, that shews itself to them now, in the face of our Lord Je-*

Jesus Christ, and in the hopes that they now have, of being with him in the heavenly tabernacles. Therefore it saith again, *With gladness and rejoicing shall they be brought; they shall enter into the Kings palace,* Isa. 35. 10.; & 51. 11.; Psal. 45. 15.

There is therefore heart-attracting glory in the Lord Jesus Christ, which when discovered, subjects the heart to the word, and makes us come to him.

It is said of Abraham, That when he dwelt in Mesopotamia, the God of glory appeared unto him, (Acts 7. 2.) saying, *Get thee out of thy country.* And what then? Why, away he went from his house and friends, and all the world could not stay him. Now, as the Psalmist says, *Who is the King of glory?* he answers, *The Lord, mighty in battle:* And who was that, but he that spoiled principalities and powers, when he did hang upon the tree, triumphing over them thereon? And who was that but Jesus Christ, even the person speaking in the text? Therefore he saith of Abraham, *He saw his day.* Yea, saith he to the Jews, *your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day, and he saw it, and was glad,* Psal. 24. 8.; Col. 2. 14, 15.; James 1. 1.; John 8. 56.

Indeed the carnal man says (at last) in his heart, *Is. 53. 1, 2, 3. There is no form or comeliness in Christ;* and when we shall see him, *There is no beauty that we should desire him;* but he lies: This he speaks, as having never seen him. But they that stand in his house, and look upon him through the glass of his word, by the help of his Holy Spirit, they will tell you other things. *But we, say they, all with open face, beholding, as in a glass, the glory of the Lord, and changed into the same image, from glory to glory,* 2 Cor. 3. 17. They see glory in his person, glory in his understanding, glory in the merit of his blood, and glory in the perfection of his righteousness; yea, heart-affecting, heart-sweetning, and heart-changing glory!

Indeed his glory is veiled, and cannot be seen, but as discovered by the Father (Mat. 11. 27.) It is veiled with flesh, with meanness of descent from the flesh, and with that ignominy and shame that attended him

in the flesh; but they that can, in God's light, see through these things, they shall see glory in him; yea, such glory as will draw and pull their hearts unto him.

Moses was the adopted son of Pharaoh's daughter; and for ought I know, had been king at last, had he conformed to the present vanities that were there at court; but he could not, he would not do it: Why? What was the matter? Why! he saw more in the worst of Christ, (bear with the expression), than he saw in the best of all the treasures of the land of Egypt. He refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter; chusing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season; esteeming the reproach of Christ, greater riches than the treasures in Egypt; for he had respect to the recompense of reward. He forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king: But what emboldened him to do this? Why, he endured; for he had a sight of the person speaking in the text: *He endured, as seeing him who is invisible.* But I say, Would a sight of Jesus have thus taken away Moses's heart from a crown, and a kingdom, &c. had he not by that sight seen more in him, than was to be seen in them? Heb. xi.

Therefore, when he saith, *Shall come to me*, he means, they shall have a discovery of the glory of the grace that is in him; and the beauty and glory of that is of such virtue, that it constraineth and forceth, with a blessed violence, the hearts of those that are given to him.

Moses, of whom we spake before, was *no child* when he was thus taken with the beautiful glory of this Lord: He was forty years old, and so consequently was able, being a man of that wisdom and opportunity as he was, to make the best judgement of the things, and of the goodness of them that was before him in the land of Egypt. But he, even he it was, that set that low esteem upon the glory of Egypt, to count it not worth the meddling with, when he had a sight of this Lord Jesus Christ. This wicked world thinks, that the fancies of a heaven, and happiness hereafter, may serve well enough to take the heart of such as ei-
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ther have not the world's good things to delight in, or that are fools, and know not how to delight themselves therein. But let them know again, that we have had men of all ranks and qualities, that have been taken with the glory of our Lord Jesus, and have left all to follow him: As Abel, Seth, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, Samuel, David, Solomon, and who not, that had either wit or grace, to savour heavenly things? Indeed none can stand off from him, nor any longer hold out against him, to whom he reveals the glory of his grace.

And him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out. By those words our Lord Jesus doth set forth (yet more amply) the great goodness of his nature towards the coming sinner. Before, he said, *They shall come*; and he declareth, *That with heart and affections he will receive them.* But by the way, let me speak one word or two to the seeming conditionality of this promise with which now I have to do. *And him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out.* Where it is evident (may some say) that Christ's receiving us to mercy, depends upon our coming, and so our salvation by Christ is conditional: If we come we shall be received; if not, we shall not: for that is fully intimated by the words. The promise of reception, is only to him that cometh; *And him that cometh.* I answer, that the coming in these words mentioned, as a condition of being received to life, is that which is promised, yea, concluded to be effected in us by the promise going before. In those latter words, coming to Christ, is implicitly required of us; and in the words before, that grace that can make us come is positively promised to us. *All that the Father giveth me, shall come to me, and him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out thence.* We come to Christ, because it is said, *We shall come*; because it is given to us to *come*: So that the condition which is expressed by Christ in these latter words, is absolutely promised in the words before. And indeed, the coming here intended, is nothing else but the effect of *shall come to me.* *They shall come, and I will*

will not cast them out.

And him that cometh.—He saith not, and him that is come, but him that cometh.

To speak to these words,

1. In general.

2. More particularly.

In general: They suggest unto us these four things

1. That, Jesus Christ doth build upon it, that, since the Father gave his people to him, they shall be enabled to come unto him. *And him that cometh,* As who should say, I know that since they are given to me, they shall be enabled to come unto me. He saith not, If they come, or I suppose they will come; but, *and him that cometh.* By these words therefore he shews us, that he addresseth himself to the receiving of them whom the Father gave to him to save them: I say, he addresseth himself, or prepareth himself to receive them: By which, as I said, he concludeth or buildeth upon it, that they shall indeed come to him. He looketh that the Father should bring them into his bosom, and so stands ready to embrace them.

2. Christ also suggesteth by these words, that he very well knoweth who are given to him; not by their coming to him, but by their being given to him. *All that the Father giveth me, shall come to me: and him that cometh, &c.* this him he knoweth to be one of them that the Father hath given him; and therefore he receiveth him, even because the Father hath given him to him, John 10. *I know my sheep,* saith he: Not only those that already have knowledge of him, but those too that yet are ignorant of him. *Other sheep have I,* said he, *which are not of this fold;* not of the Jewish church, but those that lie in their sins, even the rude and barbarous Gentiles. Therefore, when Paul was afraid to stay at Corinth, from a supposition that some mischief might befall him there; *Be not afraid,* said the Lord Jesus to him, *but speak, and hold not thy peace, for I have much people in this city,* John 10. 16.; Acts 18. 9, 10. The people that the Lord here speaks of were not at this time accounted his,

by

by reason of a work of conversion that already had passed upon them, but by virtue of the gift of the Father; for he had given them unto him: Therefore was Paul to stay here, to speak the word of the Lord to them, that by his speaking the Holy Ghost might effectually work over their souls, to the causing them to come to him, who was also ready with heart and soul to receive them.

3. Christ by these words also suggesteth, that no more *come* unto him than indeed are given him of the Father: For the *him* in this place, is one of the *all*, that by Christ was mentioned before; *All that the Father giveth me, shall come to me, and every him of that all, I will in no wise cast out.* This the apostle insinuateth, where he saith, *He gave some apostles, and some prophets, and some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: Till we all come in the unity of faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ,* Eph. 4. 11, 12, 13.

Mark, as in the text, so here he speaketh of *all*; *Until we all come.* We all! All who? Doubtless, *All that the Father giveth to Christ.* This is farther insinuated, because he calleth this *all* the body of Christ; the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ: By which he means the universal number given, to wit, the true elect church, which is said to be his body and fulness, Eph. 1. 22, 23.

4. Christ Jesus, by these words, farther suggesteth that he is well content with this gift of the Father to him. *All that the Father giveth me, shall come to me; and him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out.* I will heartily, willingly, and with great content of mind, receive him.

They shew us also, that Christ's love in receiving is as large as his Father's love in giving, and no larger. Hence he thanks him for his gift; and also thanks him for hiding of him and his things from the rest of the wicked, Matth. 11. 25.; Luke 10. 21.

But,

But, secondly, and more particularly, *And him that cometh.*—*And him.* This word *him*; by it Christ looketh back to the gift of the Father; not only to the lump and whole of the gift, but to the every *him* of that lump. As who should say, I do not only accept of the gift of my Father in the general, but have a special regard to every of them in particular; and will secure not only some, or the greatest part, but every *him*, every dust: Not an hoof of all shall be lost, or left behind. And indeed, in this he consenteth to his Father's will, which is, that of all that he hath given him, he should lose nothing, John 6. 39.

And him. Christ Jesus also, by his thus dividing the gift of his Father into *hims*, and by his speaking of them in the singular number, shews what a particular work shall be wrought in each one, at the time appointed of the Father. *And it shall come to pass in that day, saith the prophet, that the Lord shall beat off from the channel of the river, to the stream of Egypt; and ye shall be gathered one by one, O ye children of Israel.* Here are the *hims*, one by one, to be gathered to him by the Father, Isa. 27. 12.

He shews also hereby, that no lineage, kindred, or relation, can at all be profited by any outward or carnal union with the person that the Father hath given to Christ. It is only *him*, the given *him*, the coming *him*, that he intends absolutely to secure. Men make great ado with the children of believers; and Oh the children of believers! But if the child of the believer is not the *him* concerned in this absolute promise, it is not these mens great cry, nor yet what the parent or child can do, that can interest him in this promise of the Lord Christ, this absolute promise.

And him. There are divers sorts of persons that the Father hath given to Jesus Christ; they are not all of one rank, of one quality; some are high, some are low; some are wise, some fools; some are more civil, and complying with the law; some more prophane, and averse to him and his gospel. Now, since those that are given to him are in some sense so diverse;

verse; and again, since he yet saith, *And him that cometh, &c.* he by that doth give us to understand, that he is not, as men, for picking and chusing, to take a best, and leave a worst, but he is for *him* that the Father hath given him, and that cometh to him. *He will not alter nor change it: a good for a bad, or a bad for a good, Lev. 27. 9, 10.; but will take him as he is, and will save his soul.*

There is many a sad wretch given by the Father to Jesus Christ; but not one of them all is despised or slighted by him.

It is said of those that the Father hath given to Christ, that they have done worse than the Heathen; that they were murderers, thieves, drunkards, unclean persons, and what not: but he has received them, washed them, and saved them. A fit emblem of this sort, is that wretched instance mentioned in the 16th of Ezekiel, that was cast out in a stinking condition, to the loathing of its person in the day that it was born; a creature in such a wretched condition, that no eye pitied, to do any of the things there mentioned unto it, or to have compassion upon it: No eye but his that speaketh in the text.

And him. Let him be as red as blood, let him be as red as crimson: Some men are blood-red sinners, crimson-sinners, sinners of a double dye; dipped and dipped again, before they come to Jesus Christ. Art thou that readest these lines such a one? Speak out man. Art thou such a one? and art thou now coming to Jesus Christ for the mercy of justification, that thou mightest be made white in his blood, and be covered with his righteousness? Fear not; for as much as this thy coming betokeneth, that thou art of the number of them that the Father hath given to Christ; for he will in no wise cast thee out. *Come now, saith Christ, and let us reason together; though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be as red as crimson, they shall be as wool, Isa. 1. 18.*

And him. There was many a strange *him* came to Jesus Christ, in the days of his flesh; but he received

them all, without turning any away. *Speaking unto them of the kingdom of God, and healing such as had need of healing*, Luke 9. 11.; chap. 4. 40. These words, and him, are therefore words to be wondered at: That not one of them, who by virtue of the Father's gift, and drawing, are coming to Jesus Christ, I say, That not one of them, whatever they have been, whatever they have done, should be rejected, or set by, but admitted to a share in his saving grace. It is said in Luke, that the people *wondered at the gracious words that proceeded out of his mouth*, Luke 4. 22. Now this is one of his gracious words; these words are like drops of honey, as it is said, Prov. 16. 24. *Pleasant words are as an honey-comb, sweet to the soul, and health to the bones.* These are gracious words indeed, even as full as a faithful and merciful high-priest could speak them. Luther saith, "When Christ speaketh, he hath a mouth as wide as heaven and earth:" That is, to speak fully to the encouragement of every sinful *him* that is coming to Jesus Christ. And that this word is certain, hear how himself confirms it: *Heaven and earth, saith he, shall pass away; but my words shall not pass away*, Isa. 63. 1.; Matth. 24. 35.

It is also confirmed by the testimony of the four evangelists, who gave faithful relation of his loving reception of all sorts of coming sinners, whether they were publicans, harlots, thieves, possessed of devils, bedlams, and what not? Luke 19. 1,—10.; Matth. 21. 21.; Luke 15. and chap. 23. 41, 42.; Mark 19. 9.; chap. 5. 1, 2, 3,—9.

This then shews us, 1. *The greatness of the merits of Christ.*

2. The willingness of his heart to impute them for life to the great, if coming, sinners.

1. This shews us the greatness of the merits of Christ; for it must not be supposed, that his words are bigger than his worthiness. He is strong to execute his word: He can do, as well as speak. *He can do exceeding abundantly more than we ask or think, even to the uttermost, and out-side of his word.*

Now

Now then, since he concludeth any coming *him*; it must be concluded, that he can save to the uttermost sin, any coming *him*.

Do you think, I say, that the Lord Jesus did not think before he spake? He speaks all in righteousness, and therefore by his word we are to judge how mighty he is to save, Isa. 63. 1.

He speaketh in righteousness, in very faithfulness, when he began to build this blessed gospel-fabrick; he first sat down, and counted the cost; and knew he was able to finish it! What, Lord, *any him! any him* that cometh to thee! This is a Christ *worth* looking after, this is a Christ *worth* coming to.

This then should learn us diligently to consider the natural force of every word of God; and to judge of Christ's ability to save, not by our sins, or by our shallow apprehensions of his grace; but by his word, which is the true measure of grace.

And if we do not judge thus, we shall dishonour his grace, lose the benefit of his word, and needlessly fright ourselves into many discouragements, through coming to Jesus Christ. *Him, any him* that cometh, hath sufficient from this word of Christ, to feed himself with hopes of salvation. As thou art therefore coming, O thou coming sinner, judge thou, whether Christ can save thee, by the true sense of his words: judge, coming sinner, of the efficacy of his blood, of the perfection of his righteousness, and of the prevalency of his intercession by his word. *And him, saith he, that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out. In no wise, that is, for no sin: Judge therefore by his word, how able he is to save thee: It is said of God's sayings to the children of Israel, There failed not ought of any good thing which the Lord hath spoken to the house of Israel; all came to pass. And again, Not one thing hath failed of all the good things which the Lord your God spake concerning you, all are come to pass unto you; and not one thing hath failed hereof, Josh. 21. 45.; chap. 23. 14.*

Coming sinner, what promise thou findest in the word of Christ, strain it whether thou canst, so thou dost

doth not corrupt it, and his blood and merits will answer all; what the word saith, or any true consequence that is drawn therefrom, that we may boldly venture upon: As here in the text, he saith, *And him that cometh*, indefinitely, without the least intimation of the rejection of any, though ever so great, if he be a coming sinner. Take it then for granted, that thou, whoever thou art, if coming, art intended in these words; neither shall it injure Christ at all, if, as Benhadad's servants served Ahab, thou shalt catch him at his word. Now, saith the text, *the man did diligently observe whether any thing would come from him*, to wit, any word of grace; *and did hastily catch it*. And it happened that Ahab had called Benhadad his brother. The man replied therefore, *Thy brother Benhadad!* Catching him at his word, 1 Kings 20. ver. 33.; sinner, coming sinner, serve Jesus Christ thus, and he will take it kindly at thy hands. When he in his argument called the Canaanitish woman dog, she caught him at it, and said, *Truth Lord, yet the dogs eat of the crumbs that fall from their master's table*. I say, she caught him thus in his words, and he took it kindly, saying, *O woman, great is thy faith; be it unto thee even as thou wilt*, Matth. 15. 16. Catch him, coming sinner, catch him in his words, surely he will take it kindly, and will not be offended at thee.

2. The other thing that I told you is shewed from these words, is this; The willingness of Christ's heart, to impute his mercies for life to the great, *the coming sinner*. *And him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out*.

The awakened coming sinner doth not so easily question the power of Christ, as his willingness to save him: *Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst*, said one Mark. 1. 40. He did not put the *if* upon his power but upon his will: He concluded he could, but he was not as fully of persuasion that he would. As we have the same ground to believe he will, as we have to believe he can; and indeed, ground for both is the word of God. If he was not willing, why did

he promise? Why did he say, he would receive the coming sinner? Coming sinner, take notice of this, we use to plead practices with men, and why not with God likewise? I am sure we have no more ground for one than the other; for we have to plead the promise of a faithful God. Jacob took him there: *Thou saidst*, said he, *I will surely do thee good*, Gen. 32. 12. For, from this promise he concluded, that it followed in reason, He must be willing.

The text also gives some ground for us to draw the same conclusion. *And him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out.* Here is his willingness asserted, as well as his power suggested. It is worth your observation, that Abraham's faith considered rather God's power, than his willingness; that is, he drew his conclusion, *I shall have a child*, from the power that was in God to fulfil the promise to him: For he concluded he was willing to give him one, else he would not have promised one. *He staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief, but was strong in faith, giving glory to God; being fully persuaded that what he had promised he was able to perform*, Rom. 4. 20, 21. But was not his faith exercised, or tried, about his willingness too? No, there was no shew of reason for that, because he had promised it: Indeed had he not promised it, he might lawfully have doubted it; but since he had promised it, there was left no ground at all for doubting, because his willingness to give a son was demonstrated in his promising him a son. These words therefore are sufficient ground to encourage any coming sinner, that Christ is willing to his power to receive him; and since he hath power also to do what he will, there is no ground at all left to the coming sinner, any more to doubt; but to come in full hope of acceptance, and of being received unto grace and mercy. *And him that cometh.* He saith not, and him that is come; but, and him that cometh; that is, and him whose heart begins to move after me, who is leaving all for my sake; *him* who is looking out, who is on his journey to me. We must therefore distinguish betwixt

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betwixt coming, and being come to Jesus Christ. He that is come to him, has attained of him more sensibly what he felt before he wanted, than he has that but yet is coming to him.

A man that is come to Christ, hath the advantage of him that is but coming to him : and that in seven things.

1. He that is come to Christ, is nearer to him than he that is but coming to him : for he that is but coming to him, is yet, in some sense, at a distance from him ; as it is said of the coming prodigal, *And while he was yet a great way off*, Luke 15. Now he that is nearer to him, hath the best sight of him ; and so is able to make the best judgement of his wonderful grace and beauty, as God saith, *Let them come near, and let them speak*. And as the apostle John saith, *And we have seen, and do testify, that God sent his Son to be the Saviour of the world*, Isa. 41. 1.; 1 John 4. 14. He that is not yet come, though he is coming, is not fit, not being indeed capable to make that judgement of the worth and glory of the grace of Christ, as he is that is come to him, and hath seen and beheld it. Therefore, sinner, suspend thy judgement till thou art come nearer.

2. He that is come to Christ has the advantage of him that is but coming, in that he is eased of his burden : for he that is but coming, is not eased of his burden, Matth. 11. 28. He that is come, has cast his burden upon the Lord : By faith he hath seen him himself released thereof ; but he that is but coming, hath it yet as to sense and feeling, upon his own shoulders. *Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden*, implies, that their burden, though they are coming, is yet upon them, and so will be till indeed they are come to him.

3. He that is come to Christ, has the advantage of him that is but coming, in this also, namely, he hath drunk of the sweet and soul-refreshing water of life ; but he that is but coming hath not : *If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink*.

Mark, *He must come to him before he drinks ;*
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according to that of the prophet, *Ho! every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters.* He drinketh not as he cometh, but when he is come to the water, John 7. 37.; Isa. 45. 1.

4. He that is come to Christ hath the advantage of him that as yet is but coming, in this also, to wit, he is not terrified with the noise, and as I may call it, huy and cry, which the avenger of blood makes at the heels of him that yet is but coming to him. When the slayer was on his flight to the city of his refuge, he had the noise or fear of the avenger of blood at his heels; but when he was come to the city, and was entered thereinto, the noise ceased: Even so it is with him that is coming to Jesus Christ: he heareth many a dreadful sound in his ear; sounds of death and damnation, which he that is come, is at present freed from. Therefore he saith, *Come and I will give you rest*; And so he saith again, *We that have believed, do enter into rest*, as he said, &c. Heb. 4.

5. He therefore that is come to Christ, is not so subject to those dejections, and castings down, by reason of the rage and assaults of the evil one, as is the man that is but coming to Jesus Christ, (though he has temptations too). *And while he was yet coming the devil threw him down, and tore him*, Luke 9. 42. For he has (though Satan still roareth upon him) those experimental comforts and refreshments, to wit, in his treasury, to present himself with, in times of temptation and conflict; which he that is but-coming has not.

6. He that is come to Christ, has the advantage of him that is but coming to him, in this also, to wit, he hath upon him the wedding-garment, &c.: but he that is coming has not, The prodigal, when coming home to his father, was clothed with nothing but rags, and was tormented with an empty belly; but when he was come, the best robe is brought out, also the gold ring, and the shoes, yea, they are put upon him, to his great rejoicing. The fatted calf was killed for him; the music was struck up to make him

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him merry; and thus also the Father himself sang of him, *This my son was dead, and is alive again; was lost, and is found*, Luke 15. 18, 19. &c.

7. In a word, he, that is come to Christ, his groans and tears, his doubts and fears, are turned into songs and praises; for that he hath now received the atonement, and the earnest of his inheritance; but he that is but yet a-coming, hath not those praises nor songs of deliverance with him; nor has he as yet received the atonement and earnest of his inheritance, which is the sealing testimony of the Holy Ghost, through the sprinkling of the blood of Christ upon his conscience; for he is not come, Rom. 5. 11.; Eph. 1. 13.; Heb. 12. 22, 23, 24.

And him that cometh—There is further to be gathered from this word *cometh* these following particulars.

1. That Jesus Christ hath his eye upon, and takes notice of the first moving of the heart of a sinner after him. Coming sinner, thou canst not move with desires after Christ, but he sees the working of those desires in thy heart: *All my desires*, said David, *are before thee, and my groanings are not hid from thee*, Psal. 38. 9. This he spake, as he was coming (after he had backslidden) to the Lord Jesus Christ. It is said of the prodigal, That while he was yet a great way off, his father saw him, had his eye upon him, and upon the going out of his heart after him, Luke 15. 20.

When Nathanael was come to Jesus Christ, the Lord said to them that stood before him, *Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom there is no guile*. But Nathanael answered him, *Whence knowest thou me?* Jesus answered, *Before that Philip called thee, when thou wast under the fig-tree, I saw thee*. There, I suppose, Nathanael was pouring out of his soul to God for mercy, or that he would give him good understanding about the Messiah to come: And Jesus saw all the workings of his honest heart at that time, John 1. 47, 48.

Zacheus also had some secret movings of heart, such as they were towards Jesus Christ, when he

ran before, and climbed up the tree to see him; and the Lord Jesus Christ had his eye upon him: Therefore, when he was come to the place, he looked up to him, bids him come down; *For to-day*, said he, *I must abide at thy house*, to wit, in order to the further completing the work of grace in his soul, Luke 19. 1.—9. Remember this, coming sinner.

2. As Jesus Christ hath his eye upon, so he hath his heart open to receive the coming sinner. This is verified by the text: *And him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out*. This is also discovered by his preparing of the way, in his making of it easy (as it may be) to the coming sinner; which preparation is manifest by these blessed words, *I will in no wise cast out*, of which more when we come to the place. And while *he was yet a great way off*, his Father saw him, and had compassion on him; and ran and fell on his neck, and kissed him, Luke 15. 20. All these expressions do strongly prove, that the heart of Christ is open to receive the coming sinner,

3. As Jesus Christ has his eye upon, and his heart open to receive; so he hath resolved already, that nothing shall alienate his heart from receiving the coming sinner. No sins of the coming sinner, nor the length of the time that he hath abode in them, shall by any means prevail with Jesus Christ to reject him. Coming sinner, thou art coming to a loving Lord Jesus.

4. These words therefore dropped from his blessed mouth, on purpose that the coming sinner might take encouragement to continue on his journey, until he be come indeed to Jesus Christ, It was doubtless a great encouragement to blind Bartimeus, that Jesus Christ stood still and called him, when he was crying, *Jesus thou Son of David, have mercy upon me*: Therefore it is said he cast away his garment, *rose up, and came to Jesus*, Mark 10. 46. &c. Now, if a call to come hath such encouragement in it, what is a promise of receiving such, but an encouragement much more? And observe it, though he had a call to come, yet not having a promise, his faith was forced

to work upon a mere consequence, saying, He calls me; and surely since he calls me, he will grant me my desire. Ah! but coming sinner, thou hast no need to go so far about, as to draw (in this matter) consequences, because thou hast plain promises; *And him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out.* Here is full, plain, yea, what encouragement one can desire: For, suppose thou wert admitted to make a promise thyself, and Christ should attest that he would fulfil it upon the sinner that cometh to him, couldst thou make a better promise? couldst thou invent a more full, free, or larger promise? a promise that looks at the first moving of the heart after Jesus Christ! a promise that declares, yea, that engageth Christ Jesus to open his heart to receive the coming sinner! yea, farther, a promise that demonstrateth that the Lord Jesus is resolved freely to receive, and will in no wise cast out, nor means to reject the soul of the coming sinner! For all this lieth fully in this promise, and doth naturally flow therefrom. Here thou needest not make use of far-fetched consequences nor strain thy wits, to force encouraging arguments from the text. Coming sinners, the words are plain:

And him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out.

And him that cometh. There are two sorts of sinners that are coming to Jesus Christ.

1. Him that hath never, while of late, at all began to come.

2. Him that came formerly, and after that went back, but hath since bethought himself; and is now coming again.

Both these sorts of sinners are intended by the *him* in the text, as is evident: because both are now the coming sinners

For the first of these; the sinner that hath never, while of late, began to come, his way is more easy: I do not say, more plain and open, to come to Christ than is the other, (those last not having the clod of a guilty conscience for the sin of backsliding, hanging at their heels). But all the encouragement of the gospel,

gospel, with what invitations are therein contained to coming sinners, are as free and as open to the one as the other; so that they may with the same freedom and liberty, as from the word, both alike claim interest in the promise. *All things are ready, All things for the coming backsliders, as well as for the others: Come to the wedding: And let him that is athirst come, Matth. 22. 1, 2, 3, 4.; Rev. 22. 17.*

But having spoke to the first of these already, I shall here pass it by; and shall speak a word or two to him that is coming, after backsliding to Jesus Christ for life.

Thy way, O thou sinner of a double dye, thy way is open to come to Jesus Christ: I mean thee, whose heart, after long backsliding, doth think of turning to him again. Thy way, I say, is open to him, as is the way of the other sorts of comers; as appears by what follows.

1. Because the text makes no exception against thee: It doth not say, And any *him*, but a backslider; any *him*, but him. The text doth not thus object, but indefinitely openeth wide its golden arms to every coming soul, without the least exception: Therefore thou mayst come. And take heed that thou shut not that door against thy soul by unbelief, which God has opened by his grace.

2. Nay, the text is so far from excepting against thy coming, that it strongly suggesteth, that thou art one of the souls intended, O thou coming backslider; else what need that clause have been so inserted, *I will in no wise cast out?* As who should say, Though those that come now, are such as have formerly backslidden; I will in *no wise* cast awy the fornicator, the covetous, the railer, the drunkard, or other common sinners. nor yet the backslider neither.

3. That the backslider is intended, is evident,

1. For that he is sent to by name, *Go, tell his disciples, and Peter, Mark 16. 7.* But Peter was a godly man. True, but he was also a backslider, yea, a desperate backslider: He had denied his master once, twice, thrice, cursing and swearing that he

knew him not. If this was not backsliding, if this was not an high and eminent backsliding, yea, a higher backsliding than thou art capable of, I have thought amiss.

Again, when David had backslidden, and had committed adultery and murder in his backsliding, he must be sent to by name. *And, saith the text, the Lord sent Nathan to David. And he sent him to tell him, after he had brought him to unfeigned acknowledgement, The Lord hath also put away, or forgiven thy sins, 2 Sam. 12. 1.*

This man also was far gone: He took a man's wife and killed her husband, and endeavoured to cover all with wicked dissimulation. He did this, I say, after God exalted him, and shewed him great favour: Wherefore his transgression was greatened also by the prophet with mighty aggravations: Yet he was accepted, and that with gladness, at the first step he took in his returning to Christ; for the first step of the backslider's return is to say, sensibly and unfeignedly, *I have sinned*: But he had no sooner said thus, but a pardon was pronounced, yea, thrust into his bosom. *And Nathan said unto David, the Lord hath also put away thy sin,*

2dly, As the person of the backslider is mentioned by name, so also is his sin, that, if possible, thy objections against thy returning to Christ, may be taken out of the way; I say, thy sin also is mentioned by name, and mixed, as mentioned, with words of grace and favour. *I will heal their backsliding, and love them freely, Hos. 14. 4.* What sayest thou now, backslider?

3dly, Nay farther, thou art not only mentioned by name, and thy sin by the nature of it; but thou thyself, who art a returning backslider, put,

(1.) Amongst God's Israel, *Return, O backsliding Israel, saith the Lord, and I will not cause mine anger to fall upon you; for I am merciful, saith the Lord, and will not keep anger for ever, Jer. 3. 12.*

(2.) Thou art put among his children; among his children to whom he is married. *Turn, O backsliding children, for I am married unto you, ver. 14.*

(3.) Yea, after all this, as if his heart was so full of grace for them, that he was pressed until he had uttered it before them, he adds, *Return, ye backsliding children, and I will heal your backsliding.*

(4.) Nay, farther, the Lord hath considered, that the shame of thy sin hath stopped thy mouth, and made thee almost a prayerless man: and therefore he saith unto thee, *Take with you words and turn unto the Lord, and say unto him, Take away all iniquity, and receive us graciously:* See his grace, that himself should put words of encouragement into the heart of a backslider: as he saith in another place, *I taught Ephraim to go, taking him by the arms.* This is teaching him to go indeed, to hold him up by the arms, by the chin, as we say, Hos. 14 1, 2, 3, 4;

From what hath been said, I conclude, even as I said before and the *him* in the text, and *him that cometh*, includeth both these sorts of sinners, and therefore both should freely come.

Quest. But where doth Jesus Christ, in all the words of the New Testament, expressly speak to a returning backslider with words of grace and peace? for what you have urged as yet, from the New Testament, is nothing but consequences drawn from this text. Indeed it is a full text for carnal ignorant sinners that come, but to me who am a backslider, it yieldeth but little relief.

Ans. 1. How! but little encouragement from the text, when it is said, *I will in no wise cast out!* What more could have been said? What is here omitted that might have been inserted, to make the promise more full and free? Nay, take all the promises in the Bible, all the freest promises, with all the variety of expressions of what nature or extent soever, and they can but amount to the expressions of this very promise, *I will in no wise cast out:* will for nothing, by no means, upon no account, however they have sinned, however they have backslidden, however they have provoked, cast out the coming sinner. But,

2. Thou sayest, Where doth Jesus Christ, in all the words of the New Testament, speak to a returning

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ing backslider with words of grace and peace, that is under the name of a backslider?

Ans. Where there is such plenty of examples in receiving backsliders, there is the less need for express words to that intent: one promise, as the text is, with those examples that are annexed, are instead of many promises. And besides, I reckon that the act of receiving is of as much, if not of more encouragement, than is a bare promise to receive; for receiving is as the promise, and the fulfilling of it too: so that in the Old Testament thou hast the promise, and in the New, the fulfilling of it; and that in divers examples.

1. In Peter. Peter denied his master, once, twice, thrice, and that with an open oath; yet Christ receives him again without any the least hesitation or stick. Yea, he slips, stumbles, falls again, in downright dissimulation, and that to the hurt and fall of many others; but neither of this doth Christ make a bar to his salvation, but receives him again at his return, as if he knew nothing of the fault, Gal. 2.

2. The rest of his disciples, even all of them, did backslide and leave the Lord Jesus in his greatest straits: *Then all the disciples forsook him and fled; they returned* (as he had foretold) *every one to his own, and left him alone*; but this also he passes over as a very light matter: Not that it was so indeed in itself, but the abundance of grace that was in him did lightly roll it away; for after his resurrection, when first he appeared unto them, he gives them not the least check for their perfidious dealings with him, but salutes them with words of grace, saying, *All hail, be not afraid, peace be to you; all power in heaven and earth is given unto me.* True, he rebuked them for their unbelief, for the which also thou deservest the same: For it is unbelief that alone puts Christ and his benefits from us, Matth. 26. 56; John 16. 52.; Matth. 28. 9, 10, 11.: Luke 24. 39.; Mark 16. 14.

3. The man that after a large profession lay with his father's wife, committed a high transgression, e-

ven such a one that at that day was not heard of, no not among the Gentiles. Wherefore this was a desperate backsliding; yet, at his return he was received, and accepted again to mercy, 1 Cor. 5. 1, 2.; 2 Cor. 2. 6, 7, 8.

4. The thief that stole was bid to steal no more; not at all doubting, but that Christ was ready to forgive him this act of backsliding, Eph. 4. 28.

Now all these are examples, particular instances of Christ's readiness to receive the backsliders to mercy; and, observe it, examples and proofs that he hath done so, are to our unbelieving hearts, stronger encouragements than bare promises, that so he will do. But again, the Lord Jesus hath added to these, for the encouragement of returning backsliders, to come to him.

1. A call to come, and he will receive them, Rev. 2. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 14, 15, 16, 20, 21, 22.; chap. 3. 1, 2, 3, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22. Wherefore New-Testament backsliders have encouragement to come.

2. A declaration of readiness to receive them that come, as here in the text, and in many other places, is plain: Therefore, *Set thee up these marks, make thee those high heaps, (of the golden grace of the gospel), set thine heart towards the highway, even the way that thou wentest, (when thou didst backslide); turn again O virgin of Israel, turn again to these thy cities,* Jer. 31. 21.

And him that cometh. He saith not, and him that talketh, that professeth, that maketh a show, a noise, or the like; but, him that *cometh*. Christ will take leave to judge, who, among the many that make a noise, they be that indeed are coming to him. It is not him that saith he comes, nor him of whom others affirm that he comes; but him that Christ himself shall say doth come, that is concerned in this text. When the woman that had the bloody issue came to him for cure, there were others as well as she, that made a great bustle about him, that touched, yea, thronged him: Ah, but Christ could distinguish

Come, and welcome, to Jesus Christ.

stinguish this woman from them all; And he looked round about upon them all, to see her that had done this thing, Mark 25. 26,—32.

He was not concerned with the thronging, or touching of the rest; for theirs were but accidental, or at best void of that which made her touch acceptable. Wherefore Christ must be judge who they be that in truth are coming to him; *Every man's ways are right in his own eyes, but the Lord weigheth the spirits.* It standeth therefore every one in hand to be certain of their coming to Jesus Christ; for as thy coming is, so shall thy salvation be: If thou comest indeed, thy salvation shall be indeed; but if thou comest but in outward appearance, so shall thy salvation be: but of coming, see before, as also afterwards, in the use and application.

And him that cometh to me.—These words to me are also to be well heeded; for by them, as he secures those that come to him, so also he shews himself unconcerned with those that in their coming rest short, to turn aside to others: for you must know, that every one that comes, comes not to Jesus Christ; some that come, come to Moses, and to his law, and there take up for life; with these Christ is not concerned; with these his promise had not to do. *Christ is become of none effect unto you; whoso of you are justified by the law, ye are fallen from grace,* Gal. 4. 3, 4 Again, some that came, came no farther than the gospel-ordinances, and there stay; they came not through them to Christ; with these neither is he concerned; nor will their Lord, Lord, avail them any thing in the great and dismal day. A man may come to, and also go from the place and ordinance of worship, and yet not be remembered by Christ. *So I saw the wicked buried, said Solomon, who had come and gone from the place of the Holy, and they were forgotten in the city, where they had so done: this is also vanity,* Eccl. 8. 10.

To me.—These words, therefore, are by Jesus Christ very warily put in, and serve for caution and encouragement; for caution, lest we take up in our coming

coming any thing short of Christ; and for encouragement to those that shall in their coming, come past all, till they come to Jesus Christ: *And him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out.*

Reader, if thou lovest thy soul, take this caution kindly at the hands of Jesus Christ. Thou seest thy sickness, thy wound, thy necessity of salvation: Well, go not to King Jareb, for he cannot heal thee, nor cure thee of thy wound, Hos. 5. 13. Take the caution, I say, lest Christ, instead of being a Saviour unto thee, becomes a lion, a young lion to tear thee, and go away, chap. 5. 4.

There is a coming, but not to the Most High; there is a coming, but not with the whole heart, but as it were feignedly; therefore take the caution kindly, Jer. 30. 10.; Hos. 7. 16.

And him that cometh to me.—Christ, as a Saviour, will stand alone, because his own arm alone hath brought salvation unto him: He will not be joined with Moles, nor suffer John Baptist to be tabernacled by him: I say they must vanish, for Christ will stand alone, Luke 9. 28, 36.); yea, God the Father will have it so; therefore they must be parted from him, and a voice from heaven must come to bid the disciples hear only the the beloved Son. Christ will not, suffer any law, ordinance, statute, or judgement to be partners with him in the salvation of the sinner. Nay, he saith not, *And him that cometh to my word*; but, *And him that cometh to me*. The words of Christ, even his most blessed and free promises, such as this in the text, are not the Saviour of the world; for that is Christ himself, Christ himself only. The promises, therefore, are but to encourage coming sinners to come to Jesus Christ, and not to rest in them short of salvation by him. *And him that cometh to me.*—The man therefore that comes aright, casts all things behind his back, and looketh at (nor hath his expectations from ought but) the Son of God alone; and David said, *My soul, wait thou only upon God; for my expectation is from him; He only is my rock, and my salvation; he is my defence; I shall not*

be moved, Psal. 92: 5. His eye is to Christ, his heart is to Christ, and his expectation is from him, from him only.

Therefore the man that comes to Christ, is one that hath had deep considerations of his own sins, slighting thoughts of his own righteousness, and high thoughts of the blood and righteousness of Jesus Christ; yea, he sees, as I have said, more virtue in the blood of Christ to save him, than there is in all his sins to damn him. He therefore setteth Christ before his eyes; there is nothing in heaven or earth, he knows, that can save his soul and secure him from the wrath of God, but Christ; that is, nothing but his personal righteousness and blood.

And him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out.—In no wise: by these words there is something expressed, and something implied.

1. That which is expressed is Jesus Christ his unchangeable resolution to save the coming sinner; I will in no wise reject him, or deny him the benefit of my death and righteousness. This word, therefore, is like that which he speaks of the everlasting damnation of the sinner in hell-fire; *He shall by no means depart thence*; that is, never, never come out again, no not to all eternity, Matth. 5. 25.; chap. 25. 26. So that as he that is condemned into hell-fire hath no ground of hope for his deliverance thence; so him that cometh to Christ hath no ground to fear he shall ever be cast in thither.

Thus saith the Lord, *If heaven above can be measured, or the foundation of the earth searched out beneath, I will also cast away all the seed of Israel, for all that they have done, saith the Lord, Jer. 31. 37.*

Thus saith the Lord, *If my covenant be not with day and night, and if I have not appointed the ordinances of heaven and earth, then will I cast away the seed of Jacob.* But heaven cannot be measured, nor the foundations of the earth searched out beneath; his covenant is also with day and night, and he hath appointed the ordinances of heaven; therefore he will not cast away the seed of Jacob, who are the coming

coming ones, but will certainly save them from the dreadful wrath to come, Jer. 33. 25, 26.; chap. 50. 4, 5. By this therefore it is manifest, that it was not the greatness of sin, nor the long continuance in it, no, nor yet the backsliding, nor the pollution of thy nature, that can put a bar in against, or be an hindrance of the salvation of the coming sinner: For, if indeed this could be, then would this solemn and absolute determination of the Lord Jesus, of itself, fall to the ground, and be made of none effect: *But his counsel shall stand, and he will do all his pleasure,* that is, his pleasure in this; for his promise, as to this irreversible conclusion, ariseth of his pleasure; he will stand to it, and will fulfil it, because it is his pleasure.

Suppose that one man had the sins, or as many sins as an hundred, and another should have an hundred times as many as he; yet if they come, this word, *I will in no wise cast out,* secures them both alike.

Suppose a man hath a desire to be saved, and for that purpose is coming in truth to Jesus Christ, but he, by his debauched life, has damned many in hell; why, the door of hope is by these words set as open for him, as it is for him that hath not the thousandth part of his transgressions: *And him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.*

Suppose a man is coming to Christ to be saved, and hath nothing but sin, and an ill-spent life, to bring with him; why, let him come and welcome to Jesus Christ, *And he will in no wise cast him out,* Luke 7. 41. Is not this love that passeth knowledge? Is not this love the wonderment of angels? And is not this love worthy of all acceptation at the hands and hearts of all coming sinners?

2. That which is implied in the words is,

1st, The coming souls have those that continually lie at Jesus Christ to cast them off.

2^{dly}, The coming souls are afraid that those will prevail with Christ to cast them off.

For these words are spoken to satisfy us, and to stay up our spirits against these two dangers: *I will in no wise cast out.*

Come, and welcome, to Jesus Christ.

1st, For the first, Coming souls have those that continually lie at Jesus Christ to cast them off.

And there are three things that thus bend themselves against the coming sinner.

(1.) There is the devil, the accuser of the brethren, that accuses them before God, day and night, Rev. 12. 10. This prince of darkness is unwearied in this work; he doth it, as you see, day and night; that is, without ceasing: He continually puts in his caveats against thee, if so be he may prevail. How did he play it against that good man Job, if possible he might have obtained his destruction in hell-fire? He objected against him, that he served not God for nought, and tempted God to put forth his hand against him, urging, that if he did it, he would curse him to his face; and all this, as God witnesseth, *he did without a cause*, Job 1. 9, 10, 11.; chap. 2. 4, 5. How did he play it with Christ against Joshua the high-priest? *And he shewed me Joshua, saith the prophet, the high-priest, standing before the angel of the Lord, and Satan standing at his right hand to resist him*, Zech. 3.

To resist him; that is, to prevail with the Lord Jesus Christ to resist him; objecting the uncleanness and unlawful marriage of his sons with the Gentiles; for that was the crime that Satan laid against them, Ezra 10. 18. Yea, and for ought I know, Joshua also was guilty of the fact; but if not of that, of crimes no whit inferior; for he was clothed with filthy garments, as he stood before the angel: Neither had he one word to say in vindication of himself, against all that this wicked one had to say against him. But notwithstanding that, he came off well; but he might for it thank a good Lord Jesus, because he did not resist him, but, contrariwise, took up his cause, pleaded against the devil, excusing his infirmity, and put justifying robes upon him before his adversary's face.

"And the Lord said unto Satan, The Lord rebuke thee, O Satan, even the Lord that hath chosen

"Jerusalem, rebuke thee. Is not this a brand pluck-

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ed out of the fire? And he answered and spoke to those that stood before him, saying, Take away the filthy garment from him; and to him he said, Behold I have caused thine iniquities to pass from thee, and will clothe thee with a change of raiment."

Again, how did Satan ply in against Peter, when he desired to have him, that he might sift him as wheat? that is, if possible sever all grace from his heart, and leave him nothing but flesh and filth, to the end that he might make the Lord Jesus lothe and abhor him *Simon, Simon, said Christ, Satan hath desired to have you, that he might sift you as wheat.* But did he prevail against him? No: *But I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not.* As who should say, Simon, Satan hath desired me that I would give thee up to him, and not only thee, but all the rest of thy brethren, (for that the word *you* imports); but I will not leave thee in his hand: I have prayed for thee, thy faith shall not fail; I will secure thee to the heavenly inheritance, Luke 22. 30, 31.

(2) As Satan, so every sin of the coming sinner, comes in with a voice against him, if perhaps they may prevail with Christ to cast off the soul. When Israel was coming out of Egypt to Canaan, how many times had their sins thrown them out of the mercy of God, had not Moses, as a type of Christ, stood in the breach to turn away his wrath from them! Psal. 106. 23. Our iniquities testify against us, and would certainly prevail against us, to our utter rejection and damnation, had we not an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous, 1 John 2. The sins of the old world cried them down to hell; the sins of Sodom fetched upon them fire from heaven, which devoured them; the sins of the Egyptians cried them down to hell, because they came not to Jesus Christ for life. Coming sinner, thy sins are no whit less than any; nay, perhaps they are as big as all theirs: Why is it then that thou livest when they are dead, and that thou hast a promise of pardon when they had not? *Why, thou art coming to Jesus*

Jesus Christ, and therefore sin shall not be thy ruin.

(3.) As Satan and sin, so the law of Moses, as it is a perfect holy law, hath a voice against you before the face of God. *There is one that accuseth you, even Moses's law, John 5.* Yea, it accuseth all men of transgression, that have sinned against it; for as long as sin is sin, there will be a law to accuse for sin. But this accusation shall not prevail against the coming sinner; because it is Christ that died, and that ever lives, to make intercession for them that come to God by him, Rom. 8.; Heb. 7. 25.

These things, I say, do accuse us before Christ Jesus; yea, and also to our own faces, if perhaps they might prevail against us. But these words, *I will in no wise cast out*, secureth the coming sinner from them all.

The coming sinner is not saved, because there is none that comes in against him; but because the Lord Jesus will not hear their accusations, will not cast out the coming sinner.

When Shimei came down to meet King David, and to ask pardon for his rebellion, up starts Abishai, and puts in his caveat, saying, Shall not Shimei die for this? This is the case of him that comes to Christ: He hath this Abishai, and that Abishai, that presently steps in against him, saying, shall not this rebellious sin destroy him in hell? Read farther, *But David answered, What have I to do with you, ye sons of Zeruiah, that you should this day be adversaries to me? Shall there any man be put to death this day in Israel, for do not I know, that I am King this day over Israel?* 2 Sam. 19. 16,—23.

That is Christ's answer by the text, to all that accuse the coming Shimeis: *What have I to do with you, that accuse the coming sinners to me? I count you adversaries, that are against my shewing mercy to them. Do not I know, that I am exalted this day to be king of righteousness, and king of peace? I will in no wise cast them out.*

2dly, But again, these words do closely imply that the coming souls are afraid, that these accusers

will prevail against them, as is evident, because the text is spoken for their relief and succour: For that need not be, if they that are coming were not subject to fear, and despond upon this account. Alas, there is a guilt, and the curse lies upon the conscience of the coming sinner!

Besides, he is conscious to himself what a villain, what a wretch he hath been against God and Christ. Also he now knows, by woful experience, how he hath been at Satan's beck, and at the motion of every lust. He hath now also new thoughts of the holiness and justice of God: Also he feels, that he cannot forbear sinning against him: *For the motions of sin, which are by the law, doth still work in his members, to bring forth fruit unto death, Rom. 7.* But none of this need discourage, since we have so good, so tender-hearted, and so faithful a Jesus to come to, who will rather overthrow heaven and earth, than suffer a tittle of this text to fail. *And him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out.*

Now, we have yet to inquire into two things that lie in the words, to which there hath been nothing said: As, 1. What it is to cast out; 2. How it appears that Christ hath power to save or cast out.

For the first of these, What it is to cast out. To this I will speak, 1. Generally; 2. More particularly.

1. To cast out, is to slight and despise, and contemn; and as it is said of Saul's shield, *it was vilely cast away*; that is, slighted and contemned. Thus it is with the sinners that come not to Jesus Christ: He slights, despises, and contemns them; that is, *casts them away, 2 Sam. 1. 2.*

2. Things cast away are reputed as menstruous cloaths, and as the dirt of the street, *Is. 3. 22.*; *Psal. 18. 42.*; *Matth. 5. 13.*; *chap. 15. 17.* And thus it shall be with the men that come not to Jesus Christ, they shall be counted as menstruous, and as the dirt in the streets.

3. To be cast out, or off, it is to be abhorred, not to be pitied; but to be put to a perpetual shame, *Psal. 44. 9.*; *Psal. 89. 38.*; *Amos 4. 11.*

But,

But, more particularly, to come to the text: The casting out here mentioned, is not limited to this or the other evil: therefore it must be extended to the most extreme and utmost misery. Or: thus

He that cometh to Christ, shall not want any thing that may make him gospelly-happy in this world, or that which is to come; nor shall he want any thing that cometh not, that may make him spiritually and eternally miserable.

But, further, As it is to be generally taken, so it respecteth things that shall be hereafter.

For the things that are now, they are either,
1. More general; 2. Or more particular.

First, More general, thus:

1. It is *to be cast out* of the presence and favour of God.

Thus was Cain cast out; *thou hast driven (or cast) me out this day; from thy face (that is, from thy favour) shall I be hid.* A dreadful complaint! But the effect of a more dreadful judgement! Gen. 4. 13. 14.; Jer. 23. 39.; Chron. 28. 9.

2. *To be cast out*, is to be cast out of God's sight. God will look after them no more, care for them no more; nor will he watch over them any more for good, (2 Kings 17. 20.; Jer. 7. 15.). Now they that are so, are left like blind men, to wander and fall into the pit of hell. This therefore is also a sad judgement! therefore here is the mercy of him that cometh to Christ. He shall not be left to wander at uncertainties. The Lord Jesus Christ will keep him as a shepherd doth his sheep, Psal. 23. *Him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out.*

3. *To be cast out*, is to be denied a place in God's house, and to be left as fugitives and vagabonds, to pass a little time away in this miserable life, and after that to go down to the dead, Gal. 4. 30.; Gen. 4. 13, 14.; chap. 21. 10. Therefore here is the benefit of him that cometh to Christ, he shall not be denied a place in God's house. They shall not be left like vagabonds in the world, *Him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out.* See Prov. 14. 26.

Isa. 58.

Isa. 56. 3, 4, 5.; Ephes. 2. 19, 20, 21, 22.; Cor. 1. 3. 21, 22, 23.

4. In a word, *To be cast out*, is to be rejected as are the fallen angels: For their eternal damnation began at their being cast down from heaven to hell. So then, *Not to be cast out*, is to have a place, a house and habitation there; and to have a share in the privileges of elect angels.

These words, therefore, *I will not cast out*, will prove great words one day, to them that come to Jesus Christ, 2 Pet. 2. 4.; John 21. 31.; Luke 20. 35.

Secondly, And more particularly:

1. Christ hath everlasting life for him that cometh to him, and he shall never perish; *For he will in no wise cast him out*; but for the rest, they are rejected, *cast out*, and must be damned, John 10. 27, 28.

2. Christ hath everlasting righteousness to clothe them with, that come to him, and they shall be covered with it as with a garment, but the rest shall be found in the filthy rags of their own stinking pollutions, and shall be wrapt up in them, as in a winding-sheet, and so bear their shame before the Lord, and also before the angels, Dan. 9. 24.; Isa. 57. 2.; Rev. 3. 4, 18.; chap. 15. 16.

3. Christ hath precious blood, that, like an open fountain, stands free for him to wash in, that comes to him for life; *And he will in no wise cast him out*: but they that come not to him are rejected from a share therein, and are left to ireful vengeance for their sins, Zech. 13. 1.; 1 Pet. 1. 18, 19.; John 13. 8.; chap. 3. 36.

4. Christ hath precious promises, and they shall have a share in them that come to him for life; *For he will in no wise cast them out*: But they that come not, can have no share in them, because they are true only in him; for in him, and only in him, all the promises are *yea* and *amen*. Wherefore they that come not to him, are no whit the better for them, Psal. 50. 16; 2 Cor. 1. 20, 21.

5. Christ hath also fulness of grace in himself for them that come to him for life: *And he will in no*

wise cast them out: But those that come not unto him, are left in their graceless state; and as Christ leaves them, death, hell, and judgement, finds them. He that findeth me, saith Christ, findeth life, and shall obtain favour of the Lord: But he that sins against me wrongeth his own soul. All that hate me, love death, Prov. 8. 33, 34, 36.

6. Christ is an intercessor, and ever liveth to make intercession for them that come to God by him: *But their sorrows shall be multiplied, that hasten after another (or other) Gods, (their sins and lusts): Their drink offerings will he not suffer, nor take up their names into his lips, Psal. 16. 4; Heb. 7. 25,*

7. Christ hath wonderful love, bowels, and compassion, for those that come to him: *For he will in no wise cast them out. But the rest will find him a lion rampant; he will one day tear them all to pieces. Now consider this, saith he, ye that forget God, lest I tear you in pieces, and there be none to deliver you, Psal. 50. 22.*

8. Christ is known by, and for his sake those that come to him, have their persons and performances accepted of the Father: *And he will in no wise cast them out; but the rest must fly to the rocks and mountains for shelter, but all in vain, to hide them from his face and wrath, Rev. 6. 15, 16, 17.*

But again, These words, *cast out*, have a special look to what will be hereafter, even at the day of judgement: For then, and not till then, will be the great *anathema* and *casting out* made manifest, even manifest by execution. Therefore here to speak to this, and that under these two heads: As, 1. Of the casting out itself; 2. Of the place into which they shall be cast, that shall then be cast out.

First, the casting out itself standeth in two things:

1. In a preparatory work.
2. In the manner of executing the act.

The preparatory work standeth in these three things.

1. It standeth in their separation that have not come to him, from them that have at that day. Or thus, **At the day of the great casting out, those that have**

not

not (*now*) come to him, shall be separated from them that have; for them that have, *he will not cast out.* When the Son of Man shall come in his glory, and all his holy angels with him, then he shall sit upon the throne of his glory, and before him shall be gathered all nations, and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth the sheep from the goats, Mat. 25. 31, 32.

This dreadful separation therefore shall then be made bewixt them that (*now*) come to Christ, and them that come not: And good reason; for since they would not with us come to him, *now* they have time; why should they stand with us, when judgment is come.

2. They shall be placed before him according to their condition; they that have come to him in great dignity, even at his right hand; *for he will in no wise cast them out*; but the rest shall be set at his left hand, the place of disgrace and shame; for they did not come to him for life.

Distinguished also shall they be by fit terms: These that come to him he calleth the sheep, but the rest are frowish goats, and he shall separate them one from another, as the shepherd divideth the sheep from the goats: and the sheep will be set on the right hand, (next heaven gate, for they came to him), but the goats on the left; to go from him into hell, because they are not of his sheep.

3. Then will Christ proceed to conviction of those that came not to him, and will say, *I was a stranger, and ye took me not in, or did not come unto me.* Their excuse of themselves he will slight as dirt, and proceed to their final judgement.

Now when these wretched rejectors of Christ shall thus be set before him in their sins, and convicted, this is the preparatory work upon which follows the manner of executing the act which will be done.

1. In the presence of all the holy angels.

2. In the presence of all them that in their lifetime came to him, by saying unto them, *Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels, with the reason annexed to it: For*

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you were cruel to me and mine, particularly discovered in these words: *For I was an hungered, and ye gave me no meat; thirsty, and ye gave me no drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me not in; naked, and ye clothed me not; sick, and in prison, and ye visited me not, Mat. 25 .41, &c.*

Secondly, Now it remains that we speak of the place into which these shall be cast, which in the general you have heard already, to wit, the fire prepared for the devil and his angels. But, in particular, it is thus described:

1. It is called Tophet: *For Tophet is ordained of old, yea, for the king (the Lucifer) it is prepared: he hath made it deep and large, the pile thereof is fire and much wood: the breath of the Lord like a stream of brimstone doth kindle it, Isa. 30 32.*

2. It is called Hell. *It is better for thee to enter into life, halt or lame, than having two feet to be cast into hell, Mark 9. 45.*

3. It is called the wine-press of the wrath of God: And the angel thrust in his sickle into the earth, and gathered the vine of the earth, (that is, them that did not come to Christ), and cast them out into the great wine-press of the wrath of God, Rev. 14. 19.

4. It is called a lake of fire. And whatsoever was not found written in the book of life, was cast into the lake of fire, Rev. 20. 15.

5. It is called a pit. *Thou hast said in thy heart, I will ascend to heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God, I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north.—Yet thou shalt be brought down to hell, to the sides of the pit, Isa. 14.*

6. It is called a bottomless pit, out of which the smoke and the locust came, and into which the great dragon was cast; and it is called bottomless, to shew the endlessness of the pain that they will have into it, that come not in the acceptable time to Jesus Christ, Rev. 9. 1, 2.; & 20. 3.

7. It is called outer darkness. *Bind him hand and foot, and cast him into outer darkness, and cast ye the unprofitable servant into outer darkness, there shall he weeping*

weeping and gnashing of teeth, Mat. 19. 13.; & 25. 30.

8. It is called *a furnace of fire*. As therefore the tears are gathered and burned in the fire, so shall it be in the end of this world: The Son of man shall send forth his angels, and he shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them that do iniquity, and shall cast them into a furnace of fire, there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth: And again, So shall it be in the end of the world, the angels shall come forth and sever the wicked from among the just, and shall cast them into a furnace of fire; there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth. Mat. 13. 41,—51.

Lastly, It may not be amiss, if in the conclusion of this, I shew in a few words to what the things that torment them in this state are compared. Indeed some of them have been occasionally mentioned already; as that they are compared,

1. To wood that burneth,
2. To fire,
3. To fire and brimstone: But,

4. It is compared to a worm, a gnawing worm, a never dying gnawing worm; *They are cast into hell, where their worm dieth not*, Mark 9. 44.

5. It is called *unquenchable fire*: *He will gather his wheat into his garner; but will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire*, Matth. 3. 12.; Luke 3. 17.

6. It is called *everlasting destruction*. The Lord Jesus shall descend from heaven with his mighty angels in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power, 2 Theff. 1. 7, 8.

7. It is called *wrath without mixture*, and is given them in the cup of his indignation. "If any man worship the beast, and his image, and receive the mark in his forehead, or in his hand, the same shall drink of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture, in the cup of his indignation, and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone, in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb," Rev. 14. 9, 10.

8. It

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8. It is called *the second death*. And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire: this is the second death. Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power. Rev. 20. 14.; chap. 2. 6.

9. It is called *eternal damnation*. But he that shall blaspheme against the Holy Ghost; hath never forgiveness, but is in danger of eternal damnation.

Oh! these three words!

Everlasting punishment!

Eternal damnation!

And For ever and ever!

How will they gnaw and eat up all the expectation of the end of the misery of the cast-away sinners. And the smoke of their torment ascended up for ever and ever; and they have no rest day nor night, &c. Rev. 14. 11.

Their behaviour in hell is set forth by four things all know of: 1. By calling for help and relief in vain; 2. By weeping; 3. By wailing; 4. By gnashing of teeth.

And now we come to the second thing that is to be inquired into; namely, How it appears that Christ hath power to save, or to cast out: For by these words *I will in no wise cast out*, he declareth that he hath power to do both.

Now this inquiry admits us to search into two things; 1. How it appears that he hath power to save; 2. How it appears that he hath power to cast out.

That he hath power to save, appears by that which follows:

1. To speak only of him as he is mediator: he was authorised to this blessed work by his Father, before the world began. Hence the apostle said, *He hath chosen us in him, before the foundation of the world*, Eph. 1. 4. with all those things that effectually will produce our salvation. Read the same chapter, with 2 Tim. 1. 9.

2. He was promised to our first parents, that he should, in the fulness of time, bruise the serpent's head; and, as Paul expounds it, redeem them that were under the law: Hence, since that time, he hath

hath been reckoned as slain for our sins: By which means all the fathers under the first testament were secured from the wrath to come; hence he is called, *The lamb slain from the foundation of the world*, Rev. 13. 8.; Gen. 3. 15.; Gal. 4. 4, 5.

3. Moses gave testimony of him by the types and shadows, and bloody sacrifices, that he commanded from the mouth of God, to be in use to the support of his people's faith, until the time of reformation; which was the time of this Jesus his death, Heb. 9. and 10. chapters

4. At the time of his birth it was testified of him by the angel, *That he should save his people from their sins*. Matth. 1. 20, 21.

5. It is testified of him in the days of his flesh, that he had power on earth to forgive sins, Mark 2. 5.—11.

6. It is testified also of him by the apostle Peter: *That God hath exalted him with his own right hand, to be a prince and a Saviour, to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins*, Acts 30. 31.

7. In a word, This is every where testified of him, both in the Old Testament and the New.

And good reason that he should be acknowledged and trusted in as a Saviour.

1. He came down from heaven to be a Saviour, John 6. 38, 39, 40.

2. He was anointed when on earth to be a Saviour, Luke 3. 22.

3. He did the works of a Saviour: As,

(1.) He fulfilled the law, and became the end of it for righteousness, for them that believe in him, Rom. 10. 3, 4.

(2.) He laid down his life as a Saviour; he gave his life as a ransom for many, Matth. 20. 28.; Mark 10. 45.; 1 Tim. 2. 6.

(3.) He hath abolished death, destroyed the devil, put away sin, got the keys of hell and death, ascended into heaven; is there accepted of God, and did sit at the right hand as a Saviour; and that because his sacrifice for sins pleased God, 2 Tim. 1. 10.; Heb. 2.

14, 15.; Eph. 4. 7, 8.; John 16. 10.; Acts 5. 30, 31.; Heb. 10. 22, 13.

(4.) God hath sent out and proclaimed him as a Saviour, and tells the world that we have redemption through his blood, that he will justify us, if we believe in his blood, and that he can faithfully and justly do it. Yea, God doth beseech us to be reconciled to him by his Son; which could not be, if he were not anointed by him to this very end, and also if his works and undertakings were not accepted of him considered as a Saviour, Rom. 3. 24, 25.; 2 Cor. 5. 18,—21.

(5.) God hath already received millions of souls into his paradise, because they have received this Jesus for a Saviour; and is resolved to cut them off, and to cast them out of his presence, that will not take him for a Saviour, Heb. 12. 22,—26.

I intend brevity here; therefore a word to the second, and so conclude.

How it appears that he hath power to cast out.

This appears also by what follows:

1. The Father (for the service that he hath done him as a Saviour) hath made him Lord of all, even Lord of quick and dead. *For to this end Christ both died, and rose, and revived, that he might be Lord both of the dead and living,* Rom. 14. 9.

2. The Father hath left it with him to quicken whom he will, to wit, with saving grace, and to cast out whom he will, for their rebellion against him, John. 5. 22.

3. The Father hath made him judge of quick and dead, hath committed all judgement unto the Son, and appointed that all should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father, John 22. 5.

4. God will judge the world by this man: the day is appointed for judgement, and he is appointed for judge. *He hath appointed a day in the which he will judge the world in righteousness, by that man,* Acts 17.

Therefore we must all appear before the judgement-seat of Christ, that every one may receive for the things done in the body, according to what they have done. If they have closed with him, heaven and salvation: if they have not, hell and damnation.

And for these reasons he must be judge :

1. Because of his humiliation, because of his Father's word he humbled himself, and he became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross: *Therefore God hath highly exalted him, and given him a name above every name; that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow; both of things in heaven, and things on earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess, that Jesus Christ is the Lord, to the glory of God the Father.*

This hath respect to his being judge, and his sitting in judgement upon angels and men, Phil. 2. 7.

2. That all men might honour the Son, even as they honour the Father. *For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgement unto the Son; that all men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father, John 5. 22, 23.*

3. Because of his righteous judgement, this work is fit for no creature; it is only fit for the Son of God. For he will reward every man according to his ways, Rev. 2. 2.

4. Because he is the Son of man. He hath given him authority to execute judgement also, because he is the Son of man, John 5. 17.

Thus have I in brief passed through this text by way of explication. My next work is to speak to it by way of observation: But I shall be also as brief in that as the nature of the thing will admit.

All that the Father giveth me, shall come to me, and him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out, John 6. 37.

And now I come to some observations, and a little briefly to speak to them, and then conclude the whole.

The words thus explained, afford us many, some of which are these.

1. That God the Father, and Christ his Son, are two distinct persons in the Godhead.

2. That by them (not excluding the Holy Ghost) is contrived, and determined the salvation of fallen mankind.

3. That this contrivance, resolved itself into a covenant between these persons in the Godhead, which standeth in giving on the Father's part, and receiving on the Son's. *All that the Father giveth me, &c.*

4. That every one that the Father hath given to Christ (according to the mind of God in the text) shall certainly come to him.

5. That coming to Jesus Christ is therefore not by the will, wisdom, or power of man: but by the gift, promise, and drawing of the Father: *All that the Father giveth me, shall come.*

6. That Jesus Christ will be careful to receive, and will not in any wise reject those that come, or are coming to him - *And him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out.*

There are, besides these, some other truths implied in the words. As,

7. They that are coming to Jesus Christ, are oft-times heartily afraid that he will not receive them.

8. Jesus Christ would not have them, that in truth are coming to him, once think that he will cast them out.

These observations lie all of them in the words, and are plentifully confirmed by the scriptures of truth; but I shall not at this time speak to them all, but shall pass by the first, second, third, fourth, and sixth, partly, because I design brevity, and partly, because they are touched upon in the explicatory part of the text. I shall therefore begin with the fifth observation, and so make that the first in order, in the following discourse.

I. First, then, Coming to Christ is not by the will, wisdom, or power of man, but by the gift, promise, and drawing of the Father. This observation standeth of two parts.

1. The coming to Christ is not by the will, wisdom, or power of man:

2. But by the gift, promise, and drawing of the Father.

That the text carrieth this truth in its bosom, you will find if you look into the explication of the first
part.

part thereof before ; I shall therefore here follow the method propounded, viz, shew,

1. That coming to Christ is not by the will, wisdom, or power of man : This is true, because the word doth positively say it is not.

1st, It denieth it to be by the will of man. *Not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man.* And again, *It is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth*, John 1. 13.; Rom. 9. 16.

2. It denieth it to be of the wisdom of man, as is manifest from these considerations.

(1.) In the wisdom of God it pleased him, that the world by wisdom should not know him. Now if by their wisdom they cannot know him, it follows, by that wisdom, they cannot come unto him ; for coming to him, is not before, but after some knowledge of him, 1 Cor. 1. 21. ; Acts 13. 27. ; Psal. 9. 10.

(2.) The wisdom of man, in God's account, as to the knowledge of Christ, is reckoned foolishness. *Hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world.* And again, *The wisdom of this world is foolishness with God.*

If God hath made foolish the wisdom of this world ; and again, if the wisdom of this world is foolishness with him, then verily it is not likely, that by that a sinner should become so prudent, as to come to Jesus Christ, especially if you consider,

(3.) That the doctrine of a crucified Christ, and so of salvation by him, is the very thing that is counted foolishness to the wisdom of the world. Now, if the very doctrine of a crucified Christ be counted foolishness by the wisdom of this world, it cannot be, that by that wisdom a man should be drawn out, in his soul, to come to him, 1 Cor. 1. 20. ; chap. 2. 14. ; chap. 3. 19. ; and chap. 1. 18, 23.

(4.) God counted the wisdom of this world one of his greatest enemies, therefore by that wisdom no man can come to Jesus Christ. For it is not likely that one of God's greatest enemies should draw a man to that which best of all pleaseth God, as coming to Christ doth. Now, that God counteth the wisdom

of this world one of his greatest enemies, is evident,

(1.) For that it casteth the greatest contempt upon his Son's undertaking, afore is proved, in that it counts his crucifixion foolishness; though that be one of the highest demonstrations of divine wisdom, Eph. 1. 7, 8.

(2.) Because God hath threatened to destroy it, and bring it to nought, and cause it to perish; which surely he would not do, was it not an enemy, would it direct men to, and cause them to close with Jesus Christ. See Isa. 29. 14.; 1 Cor. 1. 19.

(3.) He hath rejected it from helping in the ministry of his word, as a fruitless business, and a thing that comes to nought, 1 Cor. 2. 4, 6, 12, 13.

(4.) Because it causeth to perish those that seek it, and pursue it, 1 Cor. 1. 18, 19.

(5.) And God has proclaimed, That if any man will be wise in this world, he must be a fool in the wisdom of this world, and that is the way to be wise in the wisdom of God. *If any man will be wise in this world, let him become a fool, that he may be wise. For the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God,* 1 Cor. 3. 18, 19, 20.

3dly, Coming to Christ is not by the power of man. This is evident, partly,

(1.) From that which goeth before: For man's power, in the putting forth of it, in this matter, is either stirred up with love, or sense of necessity; but the wisdom of this world neither gives man love to, or sense of a need of Jesus Christ; therefore his power lieth still, as from that.

(2.) What power has he that is dead, as every natural man spiritually is, even dead in trespasses and sins? Dead, even as dead to God's New-Testament things, as he that is in his grave is dead to the things of this world. What power hath he then, whereby to come to Jesus Christ? John 5. 25.; Ephes. 2. 1.; Col. 2. 13.

(3.) God forbids the mighty man's glory in his strength; and says positively, *By strength shall no man prevail*: and again, *Not by might, nor by power,*

but

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But my Spirit, saith the Lord, Jer. 9. 23, 24.; Sam. 2. 9.; Zech. 4. 6.; 1 Cor. 27. 28, 29, 30, 31.

(4.) Paul acknowledgeth that man, nay converted man, of himself, hath not a sufficiency of power in himself to think a good thought; if not to do that which is least, for to think is less than to come; no man by his own power can come to Jesus Christ, 2 Cor. 3. 5.

(5.) Hence we are said to be made willing to come, by the power of God; to be raised from a state of sin, to a state of grace, by the power of God; and to believe, that is, to come, through the exceeding working of his mighty power, Psal. 110. 3.; Col. 2. 12.; Ephes. 1. 18, 20.; see also Job 46. 14.

But this needeth not, if either man had power or will to come, or so much as graciously to think of being willing to come (of themselves) to Jesus Christ.

I should now come to the power of the second part of the observation, but that is occasionally done already, in the explicatory part of the text; to which I refer the reader: For I shall here only give thee one or two more to the same purpose, and so come to the use and application.

1. It is expressly said, *No man can come unto me, except the Father which hath sent me, draw him.* By this text, there is not only insinuated, that in man is want of power, but of will, to come to Jesus Christ: they must be drawn; they come not if they be not drawn: And observe, it is not man, no nor all the angels of heaven, that can draw one sinner to Jesus Christ. *No man cometh to me, except the Father, which hath sent me, draw him, John 6. 44.*

2. Again, *No man can come to me, except it were given him of my Father, John 6. 65.* It is an heavenly gift that maketh man come to Jesus Christ.

3. Again, *It is written in the prophets, they shall be all taught of God; every one therefore that hath heard and learned of the Father cometh to me, John 6. 45.*

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I shall not enlarge, but shall make some use and application, and so come to the next observation.

1. Is it so? Is coming to Jesus Christ, not by the will, wisdom, or power of man, but by the gift, promise, and drawing of the Father? Then they are to blame that cry up the will, wisdom, and power of man, as things sufficient to bring men to Christ.

There are some men who think they may not be contradicted, when they plead for the will, wisdom, and power of man in reference to the things that are of the kingdom of Christ: but I will say to such a man, he never yet came to understand, that himself is, what the scripture teacheth concerning him. Neither did he ever know what coming to Christ is by the teaching gift, and drawing of the Father. He is such a one that hath set up God's enemy in opposition to him, and that continueth in such acts of defiance; and what his end without a new birth will be, the scripture teacheth also: But we will pass this.

2. Is it so? Is coming to Jesus Christ, by the gift, promise, and drawing of the Father? Then let saints here learn to ascribe their coming to Christ, to the gift, promise, and drawing of the Father. Christian man, bless God, who hath given thee to Jesus Christ, by promise; and again, bless God for that he hath drawn thee to him. And why is it thee? Why not another? O that the glory of electing love should rest upon thy head, and that the glory of the exceeding grace of God should take hold of thy heart, and bring thee to Jesus Christ!

3. Is it so, that coming to Jesus Christ, is by the Father, as aforesaid? Then this should teach us to set a high esteem upon them that are indeed coming to Jesus Christ: I say, an high esteem on them, for the sake of him, by virtue of whose grace they are made to come to Jesus Christ.

We see that when men, by the help of human abilities, do arrive at the knowledge of, and bring to pass that which, when done, is a wonder to the world, how he that did it is esteemed and commended; yea, how are his wits, parts, industry, and unweariedness

In all, admired, and yet the man, as to this, is but of the world, and his work the effect of natural ability: the things also attained by him end in vanity and vexation of spirit. Further, perhaps in the pursuit of these his achievements, he sins against God, wastes his time vainly, and at long run loses his soul by neglecting of better things: yet he is admired! But I say, if this man's parts, labour, diligence, and the like, will bring him to such applause and esteem in the world, what esteem should we have of such an one, that is by the gift, promise, and power of God, coming to Jesus Christ?

(1.) This is a man with which God is, in whom God works and walks; a man whose motion is governed and steered by the mighty hand of God, and the effectual working of his power: Here's a man!

(2.) This man, by the power of God's might which worketh in him, is able to cast a whole world behind him, with all the lusts and pleasures of it; and to charge through all the difficulties that men and devils can set against him: Here's a man!

(3.) This man is travelling to Mount Zion, the heavenly Jerusalem, the city of the living God, and to an innumerable company of angels, and the spirits of just men made perfect, to God the judge of all, and to Jesus: Here's a man!

(4.) This man can look upon death with comfort, can laugh at destruction when it cometh, and long to hear the sound of the last trump, and to see the judge coming in the clouds of heaven: Here's a man indeed!

Let Christians then esteem each other as such: I know you do; but do it more and more. And that you may, consider these two or three things.

(1.) These are the objects of Christ's esteem, Matth. 23. 48.; chap. 15. 22,—29.; Luke 7. 9.

(2.) These are the objects of the esteem of angels, Dan. 9. 12.; chap. 10. 11.; and chap. 12. 4.; Heb. 1. 14.

(3.) These have been the objects of the esteem of Heathens,

Heathens, when but convinced about them, Dan. 5. 10; Acts 5. 15.; 1 Cor. 14. 24, 25.

Let each of you then esteem each other better than themselves, Phil. 3. 2.

4. Again, Is it so, that no man comes to Jesus Christ, by the will, wisdom, and power of man, but by the gift, power, and drawing of the Father? Then this shews us how horribly ignorant of this such are, who make the men that are coming to Christ the object of their contempt and rage. These are also unreasonable and wicked men: *Men in whom is no faith, 1 Thes. 3. 2.*

Sinners, did you but know what a blessed thing it is to come to Jesus Christ, and that by the help and drawing of the Father they do indeed come to him, you would hang and burn in hell a thousand years before you would turn your spirits as you do, against him that God is drawing to Jesus Christ, and also against the God that draws him.

But, faithless sinner, let us a little expostulate the matter. What hath this man done against thee, that is coming to Jesus Christ? Why dost thou make him the object of thy scorn? doth his coming to Jesus Christ offend thee? doth his pursuing of his own salvation offend thee? doth his forsaking of his sins and pleasures offend thee?

Poor coming man! *Thou sacrificest the abominations of the Egyptians before their eyes, and will they not stone thee? Exod. 8. 26.*

But I say, why offended at this? Is he ever the worse for coming to Jesus Christ, or for loving and serving of Jesus Christ? Or is he ever the more a fool for flying from that which will drown thee in hell fire, and for seeking eternal life? Besides, pray Sir, consider it; this he doth not of himself, but by the drawing of the Father. Come, let me tell thee in thine ear, thou that wilt not come to him thyself, and him that would, thou hinderest.

(1.) Thou shalt be judged for one that hath hated, maligned, and reproached Jesus Christ, to whom this poor sinner is coming.

(2.) Thou shalt be judged too, for one that hath hated

hated the Father, by whose powerful drawing the sinner doth come.

(3.) Thou shalt be taken, and judged, for one that has done despite to the Spirit of grace in him, that is by its help coming to Jesus Christ. What say'st thou now? Wilt thou stand by thy doings? Wilt thou continue to contemn and reproach the living God? Thinkest thou that thou shalt weather it out well enough at the day of judgement? *Can thine heart endure, or can thine hands be strong, in the days that I shall deal with thee, saith the Lord?* John 15. 18.—27.; Jude 15.; 1 Thes. 4. 8.; Ezek. 22. 14.

(4.) Is it so, that no man comes to Jesus Christ by the will, wisdom, and power of man, but by the gift, promise, and drawing of the Father? Then this sheweth us how it comes to pass, that weak means are so powerful as to bring men out of their sins, to a hearty pursuit after Jesus Christ. When God bid Moses speak to the people, he said, *I will speak with thee*, Exod. 18. 19. When God speaks, when God works, who can let it? None, none; then the work goes on. Elias threw his mantle upon the shoulders of Elisha; and what a wonderful work followed? When Jesus fell in with the crowing of a cock, what work was there! O when God is in the means, then shall that means (be it never so weak and contemptible in itself) work wonders, 1 Kings 19. 19.; Matth. 26. 74, 75.; Mark 14. 71, 72.; Luke 22, 61,—62.

The world understood not, nor believed, that the walls of Jericho should fall at the sound of rams horns; but when God will work, the means must be effectual. A word weakly spoken, spoken with difficulty, in temptation, and in the midst of great contempt and scorn, works wonders, if the Lord thy God will say so too.

6. Is it so? Doth no man come to Jesus Christ by the will, wisdom, and power of man, but by the gift, promise, and drawing of the Father? Then here is room for Christians to stand and wonder at the effectual working of God's providence, that he hath made use of, as means to bring them to Jesus Christ.

For although men are drawn to Christ by the power

of the Father, yet that power putteth forth itself in the use of means; and these means are diverse, sometimes this, sometimes that; for God is at liberty to work, by which, and when, and how he will; but let the means be what they will, and as contemptible as may be; yet God that commanded the light to shine out of darkness, and that out of weakness can make strong, can, nay, doth oftentimes, make use of very unlikely means to bring about the conversion and salvation of his people. Therefore you that are come to Christ, (and by unlikely means), stay yourselves, and wonder, and wondering, magnify almighty power, by the work of which the means hath been made effectual to bring you to Jesus Christ.

What was the providence that God made use of, as a means either more remote, or more near, to bring thee to Jesus Christ? Was it the removing of thy habitation, the change of thy condition, the loss of relations, estate, or the like? Was it the casting of thine eye upon some good book, the hearing of thy neighbours talk of heavenly things, the beholding of God's judgements as executed upon others, or thine own deliverance from them, or thy being strangely cast under the ministry of some godly man? O take notice of such providence or providences! They were sent and managed by mighty power to do thee good. God himself, I say, hath joined himself to this chariot; yea, and so blessed it, that it failed not to accomplish the thing for which he sent it.

God blesteth not to every one his providences in this manner: How many thousands are there in this world, that pass every day under the same providences! but God is not in them, to do that work by them as he hath done for thy poor soul, by his effectually working with them. O that Jesus Christ should meet thee in this providence, that dispensation, or the other ordinance! This is grace indeed! At this, therefore, it will be thy wisdom to admire, and for this to bless God.

Give me leave to give you a taste of some of those providences that have been effectual, through the management of God, to bring salvation to the souls of his people.

(1.) The

(1.) The first shall be that of the woman of Samaria. It must happen, that she must needs go out of the city to draw water (not before nor after, but) just when Jesus Christ her Saviour was come from far, and set to rest him (being weary) upon the well. What a blessed providence was this! Even a providence managed by the almighty wisdom, and almighty power, to the conversion and salvation of this poor creature. For by this providence was this poor creature and her Saviour brought together, that a blessed work might be fulfilled upon the woman, according to the purpose before determined by the Father, John 4.

(2.) What providence was it, that there should be a tree in the way for Zaccheus to climb, thereby to give Jesus opportunity to call that chief of the publicans home to himself, even before he came down therefrom, Luke 19.

(3.) Was it not wonderful, that the thief, which you read of in the gospel, should, by the providence of God, be cast into prison, to be condemned, even at that sessions that Christ himself was to die; nay, and that it should happen too, that they must be hanged together, that the thief might be in hearing and observing of Jesus in his last words, that he might be converted by him before his death? Luke 22.

(4.) What a strange providence was it, and as strangely managed by God, that Onesimus, when he was run away from his master, should be taken, as I think, cast into that very prison where Paul lay bound for the word of the gospel; that he might there be by him converted, and then sent home again to his master Philemon! *Behold all things work together for good, to them that love God; to them who are the called according to his purpose*, Rom. 8.

Nay, I have myself known some that have been made to go to hear the word preached against their wills; others have gone not to hear, but to see and to be seen; nay, to jeer and flout others, as also to catch and carp at things. Some also to feed their adulterous eyes with the sight of beautiful objects; and yet God hath made use of even these things,

and even of the wicked and sinful proposals of sinners, to bring them under the grace that might save their souls,

7. Doth no man come to Jesus Christ, but by the drawing, &c. of the Father? Then let me here caution those poor sinners, that are spectators of the change that God hath wrought in them that are coming to Jesus Christ, not to attribute this work and change to other things and causes.

There are some poor sinners in the world, that plainly see a change, a mighty change, in their neighbours and relations that are coming to Jesus Christ. But as I said, they being ignorant, and not knowing whence it comes, and whither it goes, *for so is every one that is born of the Spirit*, John 3. 8. therefore they attribute this change to other causes: As, 1. Melancholy; 2. To sitting alone: 3. To overmuch reading; 4. To their going to too many sermons; 5. To too much studying, and musing on what they hear.

Also, they conclude on the other side,

1. That it is for want of merry company.

2. For want of physic, and therefore they advise them to leave off reading, going to sermons, the company of sober people, and to be merry, and go a-gossiping, to busy themselves in the things of this world; not to so sit musing alone, &c.

But come, poor ignorant sinner, let me deal with thee. It seems thou art turned counsellor for Satan: I tell thee, thou knowest not what thou dost. Take heed of spending thy judgement after this manner; thou judgest foolishly, and sayst in this, to every one that passeth by, thou art a fool.

What! count convictions for sin, mourning for sin, and repentance for sin, melancholy! This is like those that on the other side said, *These men are drunk with new wine*, &c. Or, as he that said, Paul was mad, Acts 2. 23.; & 26. 24.

Poor ignorant sinner! canst thou judge no better? What! is sitting alone, pensive under God's hand, reading the scriptures, and hearing of sermons, &c. the way to be undone? the Lord open thine eyes,
and

and make thee to see thine error: Thou hast set thyself against God, thou hast despised the operation of his hands, thou attemptest to murder souls. What! canst thou give no better counsel touching those whom God hath wounded, than to send them to the ordinances of hell for help? Thou biddest them be merry and lightsome; but dost thou not know, that *the heart of fools is in the house of laughter*, Eccles. 7.

Thou biddest them shun the hearing of thundering preachers: *But is it not better to hear the rebuke of the wise, than for a man to hear the song of fools?* Eccles. 7. 5. Thou biddest them busy themselves in the things of this world; but dost thou not know that the Lord bids, *First seek the kingdom of God, and the righteousness thereof?* Matth. 3. 36.

Poor ignorant sinner! hear the counsel of God to such, and learn thyself to be wiser. "Is any afflicted? let him pray; Is any merry? let him sing psalms. Blessed is he that heareth me; and hear for time to come. Save yourselves from this untoward generation. Search the scriptures; give attendance to reading. It is better to go to the house of mourning." James 5. 13.; Prov. 8. 32, 33.; Acts 2. 40.; John 5. 39.; 1 Tim. 5. 13.; Eccles. 7. 1, 2, 3.

And wilt thou judge him that doth thus? Art thou almost like Elimas the forcerer, that sought to turn the deputy from the faith? Thou seekest to pervert the right ways of the Lord: Take heed lest some heavy judgement overtake thee, Acts 13. 8.—13.

What! teach men to quench convictions; take men off from a serious consideration of the evil of sin, of the terrors of the world to come, and how they shall escape the same? What! teach men to put God and his word out of their minds, by running to merry company, by running to the world, by gossiping? &c. This is as much as to bid them say to God, "Depart from us, for we desire not the knowledge of thy ways; or, What's the Almighty that we should serve him? or, what profit have we, if we keep his ways?" Here is a devil in grain! What! bid man walk according to the course of this world, according to the *prince of*

Come, and welcome, to Jesus Christ.

of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience, Ephes. 2.

Obj. But we do not know that such are coming to Jesus Christ; truly we wonder at them, and think they are fools.

Ans. 1. Do you not know that they are coming to Jesus Christ? then they may be coming to him, for aught you know; and why will you be worse than the brute, to speak evil of the things you know not? What, are you made to be taken and destroyed? must ye utterly perish in your own corruptions? 2 Pet. 2. 12.

2. Do you not know them? Let them alone then. If you cannot speak good of them, speak not bad. *Refrain from these men, and let them alone; for if this counsel, or this work, be of men, it will come to nought; but if it be of God, ye cannot overthrow it, lest haply ye be found even to fight against God, Acts 5. 38, 39.*

3. But why do you wonder at a work of conviction and conversion? Know you not that this is the judgement of God upon you, ye despisers, to behold, and wonder, and perish? Acts 13. 40, 41.

4. But why wonder, and think they are fools? Is the way of the just an abomination to you? See that passage, and be ashamed, *He that is upright in the way is an abomination to the wicked, Prov. 29. 27.*

5. Your wondering at them argues that you are strangers to yourselves, to conviction for sin, and to hearty desires to be saved; as also coming to Jesus Christ.

Obj. But how shall we know that such men are coming to Jesus Christ?

Ans. Who can make them see that Christ has made blind? John 2. 3, 9. Nevertheless, because I endeavour thy conviction, conversion, and salvation, consider,

1. Do they cry out of sin, being burdened with it, as an exceeding bitter thing?

2. Do they fly from it, as from the face of a deadly serpent?

3. Do they cry out of the insufficiency of their own righteousness, as to justification in the sight of God?

4. Do they cry out after the Lord Jesus to save them?

5. Do they see more worth and merit in one drop

of

of Christ's blood to save them, than in all the sins of the world to damn them?

6. Are they tender of sinning against Jesus Christ?

7. Is his name, person, and undertakings, more precious to them, than is the glory of the world?

8. Is this world more dear unto them?

9. Is faith in Christ (of which they are convinced by God's Spirit of the want of, and that without it they can never close with Christ) precious to them?

10. Do they favour Christ in this world, and do they leave all the world for his sake? And are they willing (God helping them) to run hazards for his name, for the love they bear to him?

11. Are his saints precious to them?

If these things be so, whether thou seeest them or no, these men are coming to Jesus Christ, Rom. 7. 9, —14.; Ps. 38. 3,—8.; Heb. 6. 18,—20.; Isa. 64. 6.; Phil. 3. 7, 8.; Psal. 54. 1.; & 109. 26.; Acts 16. 30.; Psal. 51. 7, 7.; 1 Pet. 1. 18, 19.; Rom. 7. 24.; 2 Cor. 5. 2.; Acts 5. 41.; James 2. 7.: Phil. 3. 7, 8.; Song 5. 10,—15.; Psal. 119.; John 13. 35.; 1 John 4. 7.; & 3. 14. John 16. 9.; Rom. 14. 23.; Heb. 11. 6.; Ps. 19. 10, 11.; Jer. 15. 16.; Heb. 11. 24,—27.: Acts 20. 22,—24.; & 21. 14.; Tit. 3. 15.; 2 John 1.; Ephes. 4. 16.; Phil. 7.; 1 Cor. 16. 24.

II. I come now to the second observation propounded to be spoken to, to wit, That they that are coming to Jesus Christ, are oft times heartily afraid that Jesus Christ will not receive them.

I told you that this observation is implied in the text; and I gather it, 1. From the largeness and openness of the promise; *I will in no wise cast out*. For had there not been a proneness in us to *fear casting out*, Christ needed not to have, as it were, way-laid our fear, as he doth by this great and strange expression, *in no wise*; and *him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out*. There needed not, as I may say, such a promise to be invented by the wisdom of heaven, and worded at such a rate, as it were on purpose to dash in pieces at one blow, all the objections of coming sinners, if they were not prone to admit of such objections,

ons, to the discouraging of their own souls. For this word, *in no wise*, cutteth the throat of all objections; and it was dropped by the Lord Jesus for that very end, and to help the faith that is mixed with unbelief.

And it is, as it were, the sum of all promises; neither can any objection be made upon the unworthiness that thou findest in thee, that this promise will not avail.

But I am a great sinner, sayst thou.

I will in no wise cast out, says Christ.

But I am an old sinner, sayst thou.

I will in no wise cast out, says Christ.

But I am an hard-hearted sinner, sayst thou.

I will in no wise cast out, says Christ.

But I am a backsliding sinner, sayst thou.

I will in no wise cast out, says Christ.

But I have served Satan all my days, sayst thou.

I will in no wise cast out, says Christ.

But I have sinned against light, sayst thou.

I will in no wise cast out, says Christ.

But I have sinned against mercy, sayst thou.

I will in no wise cast out, says Christ.

But I have no good thing to bring with me, sayst thou.

I will in no wise cast out, says Christ.

Thus I might go on to the end of things, and shew you, that still this promise was provided to answer all objections, and doth answer them. But I say, what need it be, if they that are coming to Jesus Christ are not sometimes, yea, oftentimes, heartily afraid, *that Jesus Christ will cast them out?*

2. I will give you now two instances that seem to imply the truth of this observation.

In the 9th of Matthew, at the 2d verse, you read of a man that was sick of the palsy; and he was coming to Jesus Christ, being borne upon a bed by his friends: he also was coming himself, and that upon another account than any of his friends were aware of; even for the pardon of sins, and the salvation of his soul. Now, so soon as ever he was come into the presence of Christ, Christ bids him *be of good cheer*. It seems then his heart was fainting; but what was the cause of his fainting? Not his bodily infirmity, for

for the cure of which his friends did bring him to Christ; but the guilt and burthen of his sins, for the pardon of which himself did come to him; therefore he proceeds, *Be of good cheer, thy sins be forgiven thee.*

I say, Christ saw him sinking in his mind, about how it would go with his most noble part; and therefore, first, he applies himself to him upon that account. For though his friends had faith enough as to the cure of the body, yet he himself had little enough as to the cure of his soul: therefore Christ takes him up as a man falling down, saying, *Son, be of good cheer, thy sins are forgiven thee.*

That about the prodigal seems pertinent also to this matter; *When he was come to himself, he said, How many hired servants of my Father hath bread enough and to spare, and I perish for hunger! I will arise now, and go to my Father. Heartily spoken;* but how did he perform his promise? I think not so well as he promised to do; and my ground for my thoughts is, because his Father, so soon as he was come to him, fell upon his neck, and kissed him; implying, methinks, as if the prodigal by this time was dejected in his mind; and therefore his Father gives him the most sudden and familiar token of reconciliation.

And kisses were of old time often used to remove doubts and fears. Thus Laban and Esau kiss Jacob: Thus Joseph kissed his brethren; and thus also David kissed Absalom, Gen. 35. 55.; chap. 33. 1,—7.; and chap. 48. 9, 10.; 2 Sam. 14. 33.

It is true, as I said, at first setting out, he spake heartily, as sometimes sinners also do in their beginning to come to Jesus Christ; but might not he, yea, in all probability he had, (between the first step he took, and the last, by which he accomplished that journey), many a thought, both this way and that; as whether his father would receive him or no? As thus: I said, *I would go to my Father*: But how, if when I came at him he should ask me, *Where I have all this while been?* What shall I say then?

Also, if he ask me, What is become of the portion of goods that he gave me? What shall I say then? If he ask me, Who have been my companions? What shall I say then? If he also should ask me, What hath been my preferment in all the time of my absence from him? What shall I say then? Yea, and if he ask me, Why I came home no sooner? What shall I say then? Thus, I say, might he reason with himself; and being conscious to himself, that he could give but a bad answer to any of these interrogatories, no marvel if he stood in need first of all of a kiss from his Father's lips. For had he answered the first in truth, he must say, I have been a haunter of taverns and ale-houses; and as for my portion, I spent it in riotous living; my companions were whores and drabs; as for my preferment, the highest was, that I became a hogherd; and as for my not coming home till now, could I have made shift to stay abroad any longer, I had not been at thy feet for mercy now.

I say, these things considered, and considering again, how prone poor men are, to give way, when truly awakened, to despondings, and heart-misgivings, no marvel if he did sink in his mind, between the time of his first setting out, and that of his coming to his Father.

3. But, thirdly, methinks I have, for the confirmation of this truth, the consent of all the saints that are under heaven, to wit, That they that are coming to Jesus Christ, are oft-times heartily afraid that he will not receive them.

Quest. But what should be the reason?

I will answer to this question thus.

1. It is not for want of the revealed will of God, that manifesteth grounds for the contrary, for of that there is a sufficiency; yea, the text itself hath laid a sufficient foundation for encouragement, for them that are coming to Jesus Christ.

And him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out.

2. It is not for want of any invitation to come, for that is full and plain: *Come unto me, all ye that labour*

hour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest, Matth. 11. 28.

3. Neither is it for want of manifestation of Christ's willingness to receive, as those texts above named, with that which follows, declareth, *If any thirst, let him come unto me and drink, John 7. 5.*

4. It is not for want of exceeding great and precious promises to receive them that come *Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing, and I will receive you, and I will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty, 2 Cor. 6. 17, 18.*

5. It is not for want of solemn oath and engagement to save them that come: *For because he could swear by no greater, he swore by himself,—That by two immutable things, in which it was impossible that God should lie, we might have strong consolation, who have fled for refuge, to lay hold on the hope set before us, Heb. 6. 15,—19.*

6. Neither is it for want of great examples of God's mercy, that have come to Jesus Christ, of which we read most plentifully in the word.

Therefore, it must be concluded, it is for want of that which follows.

1. It is for want of the knowledge of Christ. Thou knowest but little of the grace and kindness that is in the heart of Christ; thou knowest but little of the virtue and merit of his blood; thou knowest but little of the willingness that is in his heart to save thee: and this is the reason of the fear that ariseth in thy heart, and that causeth thee to doubt, that Christ will not receive thee. Unbelief is the daughter of Ignorance. Therefore Christ saith, *O fools, and slow of heart to believe, Luke 24. 25.*

Slowness of heart to believe, flows from thy foolishness in the things of Christ; this is evident to all that are acquainted with themselves, and are seeking after Jesus Christ. The more ignorance, the more unbelief: The more knowledge of Christ, the more faith. *They that know thy name, will put their trust*

in thee, Psal. 9. 10. He therefore that began to come to Christ but the other day, and hath yet but little knowledge of him, he fears that Christ will not receive him. But he that hath been longer acquainted with him, *he is strong, and hath overcome the wicked one*, 1 John 2.

When Joseph's brethren came into Egypt to buy corn, it is said, *Joseph knew his brethren, but his brethren knew not him*. What follows? Why, great mistrust of heart about their speeding well; especially, if Joseph did but answer them roughly, calling them spies, and questioning their truth, and the like. And observe it, so long as their ignorance about their brother remained with them, whatsoever Joseph did, still they put the worse sense upon it: For instance, Joseph upon a time bids the steward of his house bring them home, to dine with him, to dine even in Joseph's house: And how is this resented by them? Why, they are afraid: *And the men were afraid, because they were brought unto (their brother) Joseph's house*. And they said, *He seeketh occasion against us, and will fall upon us, and take us for bond-men, and our asses*, Gen. 42. and 43. What! afraid to go to Joseph's house? He was their brother; he intended to feast them; to feast them, and to feast with them. Ah! but they were ignorant that he was their brother: And so long as their ignorance lasted, so long their fear terrified them. Just thus it is with the sinner that but of late is coming to Jesus Christ: He is ignorant of the love and pity that is in Christ to coming sinners: Therefore he doubts, therefore he fears, therefore his heart misgives him.

Coming sinner, Christ inviteth thee to dine and sup with him: He inviteth thee to a banquet of wine, yea to come into his wine-cellar, and his banner over thee shall be love, Rev. 30. 20.; Song 2. 5. But I doubt it, says the sinner: but it is answered, he calls thee, invites thee to his banquet, flaggons, apples, to his wine, and to the juice of his pomegranate. O I fear, I doubt, I mistrust, I tremble in expectation of the contrary! Come out of the man, thou dastardly

stardly Ignorance. Be not afraid, sinner, only believe, *He that cometh to Christ, he will in no wise cast out.*

Let the coming sinner therefore seek after more of the good knowledge of Jesus Christ: Press after it, seek it as silver, and dig for it as for hid treasure, This will embolden thee; this will make thee wax stronger and stronger. *I know whom I have believed, I know him, said Paul; and what follows? Why, and I am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed to him, against that day, 2 Tim. 1. 12.*

What had Paul committed to Jesus Christ? The answer is, He had committed to him his soul. But why did he commit his soul to him? Why, because he knew him: He knew him to be faithful, to be kind: He knew he would not fail him, nor forsake him; and therefore he laid his soul down at his feet, and committed it to him, to keep against that day. But,

2. Thy fears that Christ will not receive thee, may be also a consequent of thy earnest and strong desires after thy salvation by him. For this I observe, that strong desires to have, are attended with strong fears of missing. What man most sets his heart upon, and what his desires are most after, he (oft-times) most fears he shall not obtain. So the man, ruler of the synagogue, had a great desire that his daughter should live: and that desire was attended with fear, that she should not: Therefore Christ saith unto him, *Be not afraid, Mark 5. 36.*

Suppose a young man should have his heart much set upon a virgin to have her to wife, if ever he fears he shall not obtain her, it is when he begins to love; now, thinks he, some body will step in betwixt my love and the object of it; either they will find fault with my person, my estate, my condition, or something.

Now thoughts begin to work; she doth not like me, or something. And thus it is with the soul at first coming to Jesus Christ, thou lovest him, and thy love produces jealousy, and that jealousy oft-times begets fears.

Now

Now thou fearest the sins of thy youth, the sins of thine old age, the sins of thy calling, the sins of thy Christian duties, the sins of thine heart, or something; thou thinkest something or other will alienate the heart and affections of Jesus Christ from thee; thou thinkest he sees something in thee, for the sake of which he will refuse thy soul.

But be content, a little more knowledge of him will make thee take better heart; thy earnest desires shall not be attended with such burning fears; thou shalt hereafter say, *This is my infirmity*, Psal 77.

Thou art sick of love, a very sweet disease, and yet every disease has some weakness attending of it: yet I wish this distemper (if it be lawful to call it so) was more epidemical. Die of this disease, I would gladly do: it is better than life itself, though it be attended with fears. But thou criest out, I cannot obtain: Well, be not too hasty to make conclusions: If Jesus Christ had not put his finger in at the hole of the lock, thy bowels would not have been troubled for him, (Song. 5.): Mark how the prophet hath it, "They shall walk after the Lord: he shall roar like a lion: when he shall roar, the children shall tremble from the west, they shall tremble like a bird out of Egypt, and as a dove out of the land of Assyria" Hol. 11, 10, 11.

When God roars, (as oft-times the coming soul hears him roar), what man that is coming, can do otherwise than tremble? (Amos 3. 8.). But trembling he comes; *He sprang in, and came trembling, and fell down before Paul and Silas*, Acts 16.

Should you ask him that we mentioned but now, How long is it since you began to fear you should miss of this damsel you love so? The answer will be, ever since I began to love her. But did you not fear it before? No, nor should I fear now, but that I vehemently love her. Come, sinner, let us apply it: How long is it since thou began to fear that Jesus Christ will not receive thee? The answer is, Ever since I began to desire that he would save my soul.

I began to fear, when I began to come: and the more my heart burns in desires after him, the more I feel my heart fear I should not be saved by him.

See now, Did not I tell thee, that thy fears were but the consequence of strong desires? Well, fear not, coming sinner, thousands of coming souls are in thy condition, and yet they will get safe into Christ's bosom. Say (says Christ) *to them that are of a fearful heart, be strong, fear not; Your God will come and save you, Isa. 35. 4.; & 63. 1.*

3. Thy fear that Christ will not receive thee, may arise from a sense of thy own unworthiness. Thou seest what a poor, sorry, wretched, worthless creature thou art. And seeing this, thou fearest Christ will not receive thee. Alas, sayst thou, I am the vilest of all men; a town sinner, a ring-leading sinner! I am not only a sinner myself, but have made others two fold worse the children of hell also. Besides, now I am under some awakenings and stirrings of mind after salvation, even now I find my heart rebellious, carnal, hard, treacherous, desperate, prone to unbelief, to despair: It forgetteth the word; it wandereth; it runneth to the ends of the earth. There is not (I am persuaded) one in all the world, that hath such a desperate wicked heart as mine is: My soul is careless to do good, but none more earnest to do that which is evil.

Can such a one as I am live in glory? Can an holy, a just, and a righteous God, once think (with honour to his name) of saving such a vile creature as I am? I fear it, Will he shew wonders to such a dead dog as I am? I doubt it.

I am cast out to the loathing of my person, yea, I loath myself; I stink in mine own nostrils. How can I then be accepted by a holy and sin-aborring God? Psal. 38. 5, 6, 7.; Ezek. 10. & 20. 42, 43, 44. Saved I would be; and who is there that would not, were they in my condition? Indeed I wonder at the madness and folly of others, when I see them leap and skip so carelessly about the mouth of hell! Bold sinner, how darcest thou tempt God, by laughing at
the

the breach of his holy law? But alas! they iare not so bad one way, but I am worse another: I wash myself were any body but myself: and yet here gain, I know not what to wish. When I see such as I believe are coming to Jesus Christ, O I bless them! But am confounded in myself, to see how unlike (as I think) I am to a very good many in the world. They can read, hear, pray, remember, repent, be humble, do every thing better than so vile a wretch as I.

I, vile wretch, am good for nothing, but to burn in hell-fire, and when I think of that I am confounded too.

Thus the sense of unworthiness creates and heightens fears in the hearts of them that are coming to Jesus Christ; but indeed it should not: for who needs the physician but the sick? or, who did Christ come into the world to save, but the chief of sinners? (Mark 1. 17.; 1 Tim. 1. 15.). Wherefore, the more thou seeest thy sins. the faster fly thou to Jesus Christ. And let the sense of thine own unworthiness prevail with thee yet to go faster. As it is with the man that carrieth his broken arm in a sling to the bone-setter, still as he thinks of his broken arm, and as he feels the pain and anguish, he hastens his pace to the man; and if Satan meets thee, and asketh, Whither goest thou? tell him thou art maimed, and art going to the Lord Jesus. If he objects thine own unworthiness, tell him, That even as the sick seeketh the physician; as he that hath broken bones seeks him that can set them; so thou art going to Jesus Christ for cure and healing, for thy sin-sick soul.

But it oft-times happeneth to him that flies for his life, he dspairs of escaping, and therefore delivers himself up into the hand of the pursuer. But up, up, sinner; be of good cheer, Christ came to save the unworthy one; be not faithless, but believe. Come away, man, the Lord Jesus calls thee, saying, *And him thatc ometh to me, I will in no wise cast out.*

4. Thy fear that Christ will not receive thee, may arise from a sense of the exceeding mercy of being saved.

saved: Sometimes salvation is in the eyes of him that desires so great, so huge, so wonderful a thing, that the very thoughts of the excellency of it, ingenders unbelief about obtaining it, in the heart of those that unfeignedly desire it. *Seemeth it to you* (saith David) *a light thing to be a king's son-in-law?* 1 Sam. 18. 23. So the thought of the greatness and glory of the thing propounded, as heaven, eternal life, eternal glory, to be with God, and Christ, and angels; these are great things, things too good, (saith the soul that is little in his own eyes); things too rich (saith the soul that is truly poor in spirit) for me.

Besides, the Holy Ghost hath a way to greaten heavenly things to the understanding of the coming sinner; yea, and at the very same time to greaten too the sin and unworthiness of that sinner. Now the soul staggeringly wonders, saying, What! to be made like angels, like Christ, to live in eternal bliss joy,, and felicity! This is for angels, and for them that can walk like angels!

If a prince, a duke, an earl, should send (by the hand of his servant) for some poor, soory, beggarly scrub, to take her for his master to wife, and the servant should come and say, My lord and master, such an one hath sent me to thee, to take thee to him to wife; he is rich, beautiful, and of excellent qualities; he is loving, meek, humble, well-spoken, &c. What now would this poor, sorry, beggarly creature think? What would she say? or, how would she frame an answer? When King David sent to Abigail upon this account, and though she was a rich woman yet she said, *Behold, let thine handmaid be a servant to wash the feet of the servants of my Lord,* 1 Sam. 25. 40, 41. She was confounded, she could not well tell what to say, the offer was so great, beyond what could in reason be expected.

But suppose this great person should second his suit, and send to this sorry creature again, what would she say now? Would she not say, You mock me? But what if he affirms, that he is in good earnest, and that his Lord must have her to wife; yea, suppose

he should prevail upon her to credit his message, and to address herself for her journey; yet behold, every thought of her pedigree confounds her; also her sense of want of beauty makes her ashamed; and if she doth but think of being embraced, the unbelief that is mixed with that thought, whirls her into tremblings: And now she calls herself fool, for believing the messenger, and thinks not to go; if she thinks of being bold, she blushes; and the least thought that she shall be rejected, when she comes at him makes her look as if she would give up the ghost.

And is it a wonder then to see a soul that is drowned in the sense of glory, and a sense of its own nothingness, to be confounded in itself, and to fear, that the glory apprehended is too great, too good, and too rich, for such an one?

That thing, heaven and eternal glory, is so great, and I that would have it so small, so sorry a creature, that the thoughts of obtaining it confounds me.

Thus, I say, doth the greatness of the things desired, quite dash and overthrow the mind of the desire: O, it is too big! it is too big! it is too great a mercy!

But, coming sinner, let me reason with thee: Thou sayst, it is too big, too great. Well, will things that are less satisfy thy soul? Will a less thing than heaven, than glory and eternal life, answer thy desires? No, nothing less; and yet I fear they are too big, and too good for me, even to obtain. Well, as big and as good as they are, God giveth them to such as thou; they are not too big for God to give; no not too big to give freely: Be content, let God give like himself: he is that eternal God, and giveth like himself. When kings give, they do not use to give as poor men do. Hence it is said, that Nabal, made a feast in his house like the feast of a king; and again, *All these things did Araunah, as a king, give unto David*, 1 Sam. 25.; 2 Sam. 24. Now, God is a great king, let him give like a king; nay, let him give like himself, and do thou receive like thyself: He hath all, and thou hast nothing. God told his people

people of old, that he would save them in truth and in righteousness, and that they should return to, and enjoy the land, which before, for their sins, had spewed them out; and then adds, under the supposition of their counting the mercy too good, or too big, *If it be marvellous in the eyes of the remnant of this people in these days, should it also be marvellous in mine eyes? saith the Lord of hosts, Zech 8. 6.*

As who should say, They are now in captivity, and little in their own eyes; therefore they think the mercy of returning to Canaan is a mercy too marvelously big for them to enjoy; but if it be so in their eyes, it is not so in mine: I will do for them like God, if they will but receive my bounty like sinners.

Coming sinner, God can give his heavenly Canaan, and the glory of it, unto thee; yea, none ever had them but as a gift, a free gift: He hath given us his Son, *How shall he not then with him also freely give us all things?*

It was not the worthiness of Abraham, or Moses, or David, or Peter, or Paul, but the mercy of God, that made them inheritors of heaven. If God thinks thee worthy, judge not thyself unworthy; but take it, and be thankful. And it is a good sign he intends to give thee, if he hath drawn out thy heart to ask. *O Lord, thou hast heard the desire of the humble; thou wilt prepare their hearts; thou wilt incline thine ear, Ps. 10. 17.*

When God is said to incline his ear, it implies an intention to bestow the mercy desired: Take it therefore; thy wisdom will be to receive, not sticking at thy own unworthiness. It is said, *He raiseth up the poor out of the dust, and lifteth up the beggar from the dung-hill, to set them among princes, and to make them inherit the throne of glory.* Again, *He raiseth up the poor out of the dust, and lifteth the needy out of the dung-hill, that he may set them with the princes, even with the princes of his people, 1 Sam. 2. 8.; Psal. 113. 7, 8.*

You see also when God made a wedding for his Son, he called not the great, nor the rich, nor the mighty; but the poor, the maimed, the halt, and the blind, *Mat. 22.; Luke 14.*

5. Thy fears that Christ will not receive thee, may arise from the hideous roaring of the devil, who pursues thee. He that hears him roar, must be a mighty Christian, if he can at that time deliver himself from fear. He is called a roaring lion; and then to allude to that in Isaiah, *If one look into them, they have darkness and sorrow, and the light is darkness in their very heaven*, 1 Pet. 5. 8.; Isa. 5. 30.

There are two things among many that Satan useth to roar out after them that are coming to Jesus Christ: 1. That they are not elected; 2. That they have sinned the sin against the Holy Ghost.

To both these I answer briefly,

First, Touching Election, out of which thou fearest thou art excluded: Why, coming sinner, even the text itself affordeth thee help against this doubt, and that by a double argument.

1st, That coming to Christ is, by virtue of the gift, promise, and drawing of the Father; but thou art a-coming; therefore God hath given thee, promised thee, and is drawing thee to Jesus Christ. Coming sinner, hold to this; and when Satan beginneth to roar again, answer, But I feel my heart moving after Jesus Christ; but that would not be, if it were not given by promise, and drawing to Christ by the power of the Father.

2dly, Jesus Christ hath promised, *that him that cometh to him, he will in no wise cast out*: And if he hath said it, will he not make it good, I mean even thy salvation? For, as I have said already, not to cast out, is to receive and admit to the benefit of salvation. If then the Father hath given thee, as is manifest by thy coming; and if Christ will receive thee, thou coming soul, as it is plain he will, because he hath said, *He will in no wise cast out*; then be confident, and let these conclusions, that as naturally flow from the text, as light from the sun, or water from the fountain, stay thee.

If Satan therefore objecteth, But thou art not elected; answer, But I am coming, Satan, I am coming; and that I could not be, but that the Father draws me; and I am coming to such a Lord Jesus,

as will in no wise cast me out. Further, Satan, were I not elect, the Father would not draw me, nor would the Son so graciously open his bosom to me. I am persuaded, that not one of the non-elect shall ever be able to say, no, not in the day of judgement, I did sincerely come to Jesus Christ. Come they may feignedly, as Judas and Simon Magus did; but that is not our question. Therefore, O thou honest-hearted coming sinner, be not afraid, but come!

As to the second part of the objection, about sinning the sin against the Holy Ghost; the same argument overthrows that also. But I will argue thus:

1st, Coming to Christ is by virtue of a special gift of the Father; but the Father giveth no such gift to them that have sinned that sin; therefore thou that art coming hast not committed that sin, That the Father giveth no such gift to them that have sinned that sin, is evident.

(1.) Because they have sinned themselves out of God's favour; *they shall never have forgiveness*, Mat. 13. 32. But it is a special favour of God to give unto a man, to come unto Jesus Christ; because thereby he obtained forgiveness. Therefore he that cometh, hath not sinned that sin.

(2.) They that have sinned the sin against the Holy Ghost, have sinned themselves out of an interest in the sacrifice of Christ's body and blood; *There remains for such no more sacrifice for sin*: But God giveth not grace to any of them to come to Christ, that have no share in the sacrifice of his body and blood. Therefore, thou that art coming to him, hast not sinned that sin, Heb. 10. 26.

2^{dly}, Coming to Christ is by the special drawing of the Father: *No man cometh to me, except the Father which hath sent me, draw him*. But the Father draweth not him to Christ, for whom he hath not allotted forgiveness by his blood; therefore, they that are coming to Jesus Christ, have not committed that sin because he hath allotted them forgiveness by his blood, John 6. 44.

That the Father cannot draw them to Jesus Christ for

for whom he hath not allotted forgiveness of sins, is manifest to sense : for that would be a plain mockery, a sham, neither becoming his wisdom, justice, holiness, nor goodness.

3dly, Coming to Jesus Christ lays a man under the promise of forgiveness and salvation : But it is impossible that he that hath sinned that sin, should ever be put under a promise of these. Therefore he that hath sinned that sin, can never have heart to come to Jesus Christ.

4thly, Coming to Jesus Christ lays a man under his intercession ; *For he ever liveth to make intercession for them that come*, Heb. 7. 26. Therefore he that is coming to Jesus Christ cannot have sinned that sin.

Christ has forbid his people to pray for them that have sinned that sin ; therefore will not pray for them himself ; but he prays for them that come.

5thly, He that hath sinned that sin, Christ is to him of no more worth, than is a man that is dead ; *For he hath crucified to himself the Son of God ;* yea, and hath also counted his precious blood, as the blood of an unholy thing, Heb. 7. 10. Now he that hath this low esteem of Christ, will never come to him for life ; but the coming man has an high esteem of his person, blood, and merits. Therefore he that is coming has not committed that sin.

6thly, If he that has sinned this sin might yet come to Jesus Christ, then must the truth of God be overthrown ; which saith in one place, *He hath never forgiveness ;* and in another, *I will in no wise cast him out.* Therefore, that he may never have forgiveness, he shall never have heart to come to Jesus Christ. *It is impossible that such an one should be renewed either to, or by repentance*, Heb. 6. Wherefore, never trouble thy head, nor heart about this matter ; he that cometh to Jesus Christ, cannot have sinned against the Holy Ghost.

6. Thy fears that Christ will not receive thee, may arise from thine own folly, in inventing ; yea, in thy chalking out to God a way to bring thee home to Jesus Christ. Some souls that are coming to Jesus Christ

Christ are great tormentors of themselves upon this account: they conclude, that if their coming to Jesus Christ is right, they must needs be brought home thus and thus: As to instance,

(1.) Says one, If God be bringing of me to Jesus Christ, then will he load me with the guilt of sin till he makes me roar again.

(2.) If God be indeed a-bringing me home to Jesus Christ, then must I be assaulted with dreadful temptations of the devil.

(3.) If God be indeed a-bringing me to Jesus Christ then even when I come at him, I shall have wonderful revelations of him.

This is the way that some sinners appoint for God: but perhaps he will not walk therein; yet will he bring them to Jesus Christ. But now, because they come not the way of their own chalking out, therefore they are at a loss. They look for heavy load and burthen; but perhaps God gives them a sight of their lost condition, and addeth not that heavy weight and burthen. They look for fearful temptations of Satan; but God sees that yet they are not fit for them; nor is the time come that he should be honoured by them in such a condition. They look for great and glorious revelations of Christ, grace, and mercy; but perhaps God only takes the yoke from off their jaws, and lays meat before them. And now again they are at a loss, yet a-coming to Christ; *I drew them saith God with the cords of a man, with the bands of love: I took the yoke from off their jaws, and laid meat unto them, Hos. 11. 4.*

Now, I say, if God brings thee to Christ, and not by the way that thou hast appointed, then thou art at a loss; and for thy being at a loss, thou mayst thank thyself. God hath more ways than thou knowest of, to bring a sinner to Jesus Christ: but he will not give thee before hand an account by which of them he will bring thee to Christ, Isa. 40. 13.; Job. 33. 13.

Sometimes he hath his ways in the whirlwind; but sometimes the Lord is not there, Neh. 13. 1 Kings 19. 1. If

If God will deal more gently with thee than with others of his children, grudge not at it: refuse not the waters that go softly, lest he bring up to thee the waters of the rivers, strong and many, even these two smoking fire-brands, the devil and guilt of sin, Isa. 8. 6, 7. He saith to Peter, *follow me*. And what thunder did Zacheus hear or see? Zacheus, *Come down*, saith Christ; and he came down, (says Luke,) and received him joyfully.

But had Peter, or Zacheus made the objection that thou hast made, and directed the Spirit of the Lord as thou hast done, they might have looked long enough, before they had found themselves coming to Jesus Christ.

Besides, I will tell thee, that the greatness of sense of sin, the hideous roaring of the devil, yea, abundance of revelations, will not prove that God is bringing thy soul to Jesus Christ; as Balaam, Cain, Judas, and others, can witness.

Further, consider, that what thou hast not of these things here, thou mayst have another time, and that to thy distraction. Wherefore, instead of being discontent, because thou art not in the fire, because thou hearest not the sound of the trumpet, and alarm of war, *Pray that thou enter not into temptation*: yea come boldly to the throne of grace, and obtain mercy, and find grace to help in that time of need, Ps. 88. 15; Matth. 11. 41; Heb. 4. 16.

Poor creature! thou criest, If I were tempted, I could come faster, and with more confidence, to Jesus Christ. Thou sayst thou knowest not what. What says Job! *Withdraw thy hand from me, and let not thy dread make me afraid: Then call thou, and I will answer: or let me speak, and answer thou me*, Job. 13. 21. It is not the over-heavy load of sin, but the discovery of mercy; not the roaring of the devil, but the drawing of the Father, that makes a man come to Jesus Christ; I myself know all these things.

True, sometimes, yea, most an end, they that come to Jesus Christ, come the way that thou desirest; the loading, tempted way: but the Lord also leads some

by the waters of comfort. If I was to chuse when to go a long journey, to wit, whether I would go it in the dead of winter, or in the pleasant spring, (though if it was a very profitable journey, as that of coming to Christ is, I would chuse to go it through fire and water, before I would lose the benefit): But I say, if I might chuse the time, I would chuse to go it in the pleasant spring, because the way would be more delightful, the days longer, and warmer, the nights shorter, and not so cold. And it is observable, that that very argument that thou useth to weaken thy strength in the way, that very argument Christ Jesus useth to encourage his beloved to come to him: *Arise, saith he, my love, my fair one, and come away: (Why?) For lo, the winter is past, the rain is over and gone, the flowers appear in the earth, the time of the singing of birds is come, and the voice of the turtle is heard in our land. The fig-tree putteth forth her green figs, and the vine, with her tender grapes, give a good smell: Arise, my love, my fair one, and come away,* Song 2. 10,—13.

Trouble not thyself, coming sinner: If thou seeest thy lost condition by original and actual sin; if thou seeest thy need of the spotless righteousness of Jesus Christ; if thou art willing to be found in him, and to take up thy cross and follow him; then pray for a fair wind and good weather, and come away. Stick no longer in a muse and doubt about things, but come away to Jesus Christ: Do it, I say, lest thou tempt God to lay the sorrows of a travailing woman upon thee. Thy folly in this thing may make him do it. Mind what follows, *The sorrows of a travailing woman shall come upon him: Why? He is an unwise son; so he should not stay long in the place of the breaking forth of children,* Hos. 13. 13.

7. Thy fears that Christ will not receive thee, may rise from those decays that thou findest in thy soul, even while thou art coming to him: Some, even as they are coming to Jesus Christ, do find themselves grow worse and worse; and this is indeed a sore trial to the poor coming sinner.

To explain myself: There is such an one a-coming to Jesus Christ who, when at first he began to look out after him, was sensible, affectionate, and broken in spirit; but now is grown dark, senseless, hard-hearted, and inclining to neglect spiritual duties, &c. Besides, he now finds in himself inclinations to unbelief, atheism, blasphemy, and the like; now he finds he cannot tremble at God's word, his judgements, nor at the apprehension of hell-fire: neither can he, as he thinketh, be sorry for these things. Now this is a sad dispensation: The man under the sixth head complaineth for want of temptations, but thou hast enough of them; art thou glad of them, tempted, coming sinner? They that never were exercised with them, may think it a fine thing to be within the rage, but he that is there, is ready to sweat blood for sorrow of heart, and to howl for vexation of spirit.

This man is in the wilderness among wild beasts: Here he sees a bear, there a lion, yonder a leopard, a wolf, a dragon; devils of all sorts, doubts of all sorts, fears of all sorts, haunt and molest his soul. Here he sees smoky, yea, some fire and brimstone, scattered upon his secret places: He hears the sound of an horrible tempest.

O! my friends, even the Lord Jesus, that knew all things, even he saw no pleasure in temptations, nor did he desire to be with them; wherefore one text saith, *he was led*, and another, *he was driven*, of the spirit into the wilderness, to be tempted of the devil, Matth. 4. 1.; Mark 1. 12.

But to return: Thus it happeneth sometimes to them that are coming to Jesus Christ. A sad hap indeed! One would think, that he that is flying from wrath to come has little need of such clogs as these: And yet so it is, and woful experience proves it. The church of old complained, that her enemies overtook her between the straits; just between hope and fear, heaven and hell, Lam. 1.

This man feeleth the infirmity of his flesh; he findeth a proneness in himself to be desperate: Now

he chides with God, flings and tumbles like a wild bull in a net, and still the guilt of all returns upon himself, to the crushing of him to pieces: Yet he feeleth his heart so hard, that he can find, as he thinks, no kind falling under any of his miscarriages. Now he is a lump of confusion in his own eyes, whose spirit and actions are without order.

Temptations serve the Christians as the shepherd's dog serveth the silly sheep; that is, coming behind the flock, he runs upon it, pulls it down, worries it, wounds it, and grievously bedabbleth it with dirt and wet, in the lowest places of the furrows of the field, and not leaving it until it is half dead, nor then neither, except God rebuke.

Here is now room for fears of being cast away. Now I see I am lost, says the sinner: This is not coming to Jesus Christ, says the sinner; such a desperate, hard, and wretched heart as mine is, cannot be a gracious one, saith the sinner: And bid such an one be better, he says, I cannot, no, I cannot.

Quest. But what will you say to a soul in this condition?

Ans. I will say, That temptations have attended the best of God's people: I will say, That temptations come to do us good; and I will say also, That there is a difference betwixt growing worse and worse, and thy seeing more clearly how bad thou art.

There is a man of an ill-favoured countenance, who hath too high a conceit of his beauty; and wanting the benefit of a glass, he still stands in his own conceit; at last a limner is sent unto him, who draweth his ill-favoured face to the life; now looking thereon, he begins to be convinced that he is not half so handsome as he thought he was. Coming sinner, thy temptations are these painters, they have drawn out thy ill-favoured heart to the life, and have set it before thine eyes, and now thou seest how ill-favoured thou art.

Hezekiah was a good man, yet when he lay sick (for aught I know) he had somewhat too good an opinion of his heart; and for aught I know also, the

Lord might upon his recovery leave him to a temptation, that he might better know all that was in his heart. Compare Isa. 38. 1, 2, 3. with 2 Chron 32. 31.

Alas! we are sinful out of measure, but see it not to the full, until an hour of temptation comes: But when it comes, it doth as the painter doth, draweth out our heart to the life: yet the sight of what we are should not keep us from coming to Jesus Christ.

There are two ways by which God lets a man in to a sight of the naughtiness of his heart; one is, by the light of the word and Spirit of God; and the other is, by the temptations of the devil. But, by the first, we see our naughtiness one way, and, by the second, another. By the light of the word and Spirit of God, thou hast a sight of thy naughtiness, and by the light of the sun, thou hast a sight of the spots and defilements that are in thy house or raiment. Which light gives thee to see a necessity of cleansing, but maketh not the blemishes to spread more abominably. But when Satan comes, when he tempts, he puts life and rage into our sins, and turns them, as it were, into so many devils within us. Now, like prisoners, they attempt to break through the prison of our body; they will attempt to get out at our eyes, mouth, ears, any ways, to the scandal of the gospel, and reproach of religion, to the darkening of our evidences, and damning of our souls.

But I shall say, as I said before, this hath oft-times been the lot of God's people. And, *No temptation hath overtaken thee, but such as is common to man; and God is faithful, who will not suffer thee to be tempted above what thou art able*, 1 Cor. 10. 13. See the book of Job, the book of Psalms, and that of the Lamentations. And remember farther, that Christ himself was tempted to blaspheme, to worship the devil, and to murder himself, Matth. 4.; Luke 4. (temptations worse than which thou canst hardly be overtaken with). But he was sinless, that is true. And he is thy Saviour, and that is as true. Yea, it is as true also, that by his being tempted, he became the conqueror of the tempter, and a succourer of those

those that are tempted, Col. 2. 14, 15.; Heb. 2. 15.; & 4. 15, 16.

Quest. But what should be the reason that some that are coming to Christ, should be so lamentably cast down, and buffeted with temptations?

Ans. It may be for several causes.

1. Some that are coming to Christ, cannot be persuaded, until the temptation comes, that they are so vile as the scripture saith they are. True, they see so much of their wretchedness, as to drive them to Christ: But there is an over and above of wickedness, which they see not. Peter little thought that he had had cursing and swearing, and lying, and an inclination in his heart to deny his Master, before the temptation came: but when that indeed came upon him, then he found it there to his sorrow, John 13. 36, 37, 38.; Mark 14. 36,—40, 68,—72.

2. Some that are coming to Jesus Christ, are too much affected with their own graces, and too little taken with Christ's person; wherefore God, to take them off from doting on their own jewels, and that they might look more to the person, undertaking, and merits of his Son, plunges them into the ditch by temptations. And this I take to be the meaning of Job: *If I wash me saith he with snow-water, and make myself never so clean, yet wilt thou plunge me in the ditch, and mine own cloaths shall abhor me,* Job 9. 30. Job had been a little too much tampering with his own graces, and setting his excellencies a little too high; (as these texts make manifest, Job 33. 8,—13.; & 34. 5,—10.; & 35. 2, 3.; & 38. 1. 2.; & 40. 1,—5.; & 42. 3,—7.). But by that the temptations were ended, you find him better taught,

Yea, God doth oft-times, even for this thing, as it were, take our graces from us, and so leave us almost quite to ourselves, and to the tempter, that we may learn not to love the picture more than the person of his Son. See how he dealt with them in the 16th of Ezekiel, and the 2d of Hosea.

3. Perhaps thou hast been given too much to judge thy brother, to condemn thy brother, because a poor tempted

tempted man: And God, to bring down the pride of thy heart, letteth the tempter loose upon thee, that thou also mayst feel thyself weak. *For pride goeth before destruction, and an haughty spirit before a fall,* Prov. 16, 18.

4. It may be thou hast dealt a little too roughly with those that God hath this way wounded, not considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted: And therefore God hath suffered it to come unto thee, Gal. 6. 1.

5. It may be thou wast given to slumber and sleep, and therefore these temptations were sent to awake thee. You know that Peter's temptation came upon him, after his sleeping; then, instead of watching and praying, then he denied, and denied, and denied his Master, Matth. 26.

6. It may be thou hast presumed too far, and stood too much in thine own strength, and therefore is a time of temptation come upon thee. This was also one cause why it came upon Peter, *Though all men forsake thee, yet will not I.* Ah! that is the way to be tempted indeed, John 13. 36,—38.

7. It may be God intends to make thee wise, to speak a word in season to others that are afflicted; and therefore he suffereth thee to be tempted. Christ was tempted that he might be able to succour them that are tempted, Heb. 2. 18.

8. It may be Satan hath dared God to suffer him to tempt thee: promising himself, that if he will but let him do it, thou wilt curse him to his face. Thus he obtained leave against Job; wherefore take heed, tempted soul, lest thou provest the devil's saying true, Job 1. 2.

9. It may be thy graces must be tried in the fire, that that rust that cleaveth to them, may be taken away, and themselves proved, both before angels and devils, to be far better than of gold that perisheth; it may be also, that thy graces are to receive special praises and honour and glory, at the coming of the Lord Jesus, (to judgement), for all the exploits that thou hast acted by them against hell, and its infernal crew,

in the day of thy temptation, 1 Pet. 1. 6, 7.
10. It may be God would have others learn by thy sighs, groans, and complaints, under temptations, to beware of those sins, for the sake of which thou art at present delivered to the tormentors.

But to conclude this, put the worst to the worst, (and then things will be bad enough), suppose that thou art to this day without the grace of God, yet thou art but a miserable creature, a sinner, that has need of a blessed Saviour; and the text presents thee with one as good and kind as heart can wish; who also for thy encouragement saith, *and him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out.*

To come therefore to a word of Application.

Is it so, that they that are coming to Jesus Christ are oft-times heartily afraid, that Jesus Christ will not receive them? Then this teacheth us these things:

1. That faith and doubting may at the same time have their residence in the same soul. *O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt?* Mat. 14. 31. He saith not, O thou of no faith; but, O thou of little faith; because he had a little faith in the midst of his many doubts. The same is true, even of many that are coming to Jesus Christ: They come, and fear they come not, and doubt they come not. When they look upon the promise, or a word of encouragement by faith, then they come; when they look upon themselves, or the difficulties that lie before them, then they doubt. Bid me come, said Peter; Come, said Christ. So he went down out of the ship to go to Jesus, but his hap was to go to him upon the water; there was the trial. So it was with the poor desiring soul. Bid me come, says the sinner; come, says Christ, and I will in no wise cast thee out: So he comes, but his hap is to come upon the water, upon drowning difficulties; if therefore the wind of temptations blow, the waves of doubts and fears will presently arise, and this coming sinner will begin to sink, if he has but little faith.

But you shall find here in Peter's little faith, a two-fold act; to wit, coming and crying: Little faith cannot

not come all the way without crying. So long as its holy boldness lasts, so long it can come with peace; but when it is so, it can come no farther, it will go the rest of the way with crying. Peter went as far as his little faith would carry him: He also cried as far as his little faith would help, *Lord, save me, I perish.* And so with coming and crying he was kept from sinking, though he had but a little faith. *Jesus stretched forth his hand, and caught him, and said unto him, O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt?*

2. Is it so, that they that are coming to Jesus Christ, are oft-times heartily afraid that Jesus Christ will not receive them? Then this shews us a reason of that dejection, and those castings down, that very often we perceive to be in them that are coming to Jesus Christ. Why, it is because they are afraid that Jesus Christ will not receive them. The poor world they mock us, because we are a dejected people; I mean, because we are sometimes so; but they do not know the cause of our dejection. Could we be persuaded, even then, when we are dejected, that Jesus Christ would indeed receive us, it would make us fly over their heads, and would put more gladness into our hearts, than in the time in which their corn, wine, and oil increases, *Ps. 4.*

3. Is it so, that they that are coming to Jesus Christ, are oft-times heartily afraid that he will not receive them? Then this shews, that they that are coming to Jesus Christ, are an awakened, sensible, considering people: For fear cometh from sense, and consideration of things. They are sensible of sin, sensible of the curse due thereto; they are also sensible of the glorious majesty of God, and of what a blessed, blessed thing it is to be received of Jesus Christ: The glory of heaven, and the evil of sin, these things they consider, and are sensible of. *When I remember, I am afraid: When I consider, I am afraid, Job 21. 6. & 23. 15.*

These things dash their spirits, being awake and sensible. Were they dead, like other men, they would not be afflicted with fear, as they are: For dead men fear not, feel not, care not; but the living and sensible man, he it is that is oft-times heartily afraid that

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Jesus Christ will not receive him. I say, the dead and senseless are not distressed: They presume they are groundlessly confident. Who so bold as blind Bayard? These indeed should fear and be afraid because they are not coming to Jesus Christ. O the hell, the fire, the pit, the wrath of God, and torment of hell, that are prepared for poor neglecting sinners! *How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation!* Heb. 2. 3. But they want sense of things and so cannot fear.

4. Is it so, that they that are coming to Jesus Christ, are oft-times heartily afraid that he will not receive them? Then this should teach old Christians to pity and pray for young comers: You know the heart of a stranger, for you yourselves were strangers in the land of Egypt. You know the fears, and doubts, and terrors, that take hold of them: for that they sometimes took hold of you. Wherefore pity them, pray for them, encourage them; they need all this: guilt hath overtaken them, fear of the wrath of God hath overtaken them: Perhaps they are within the sight of hell-fire; and the fear of going thither is burning hot within their hearts.

You may know, how strangely Satan is suggesting his devilish doubts unto them, if possible he may sink and drown them with his multitude and weight of them. Old Christians, mend up the path for them, take the stumbling-blocks out of the way; lest that which is feeble and weak be turned aside, but let it rather be healed, Heb. 12.

III. I come now to the next observation, and shall speak a little to that; to wit, That Jesus Christ would not have them, that in truth are coming to him, once think, that he will cast them out.

The text is full of this: *And him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out.* Now, if he saith, I will not, he would not have us think he will.

This is yet farther manifest by these considerations.

1. Christ Jesus did forbid even them that as yet were not coming to him, once to think him such an one. *Do not think* said he, *that I will accuse you to the Father,* John 5. 45.

These (as I said) were such, that as yet were not coming to him: For he saith of them a little before and ye will not come to me: for the respect they had to the honour of men kept them back. Yet, I say, Jesus Christ gives them to understand, that though he might justly reject them, yet he would not, but bids them not once to think that he would accuse them to the Father. Now, not to accuse (with Christ) is to plead for: for Christ in these things stands not neuter between the Father and sinners. So then, if Jesus Christ would not have them think, that yet will not come to him, that he will accuse them; then he would not that they should think so, that in truth are coming to him; *And him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out.*

2. When the woman taken in adultery (even in the very act) was brought before Jesus Christ, he so carried it both by words and actions, that he evidently enough made it manifest, that condemning and casting out were such things, for the doing of which he came not into the world.

Wherefore, when they had set her before him, and had laid to her charge her heinous fact, he stooped down, and with his finger wrote upon the ground as though he heard them not. Now what did he do by this carriage, but testify plainly that he was not for receiving accusations against poor sinners, whoever accused by? And observe, though they continue asking, thinking at last to force him to condemn her; yet then he so answered, as that he drove all condemning persons from her. And then he adds, for her encouragement to come to him; *Neither do I condemn thee; go, and sin no more, John 8. 1.—12.*

Not but that he indeed abhorred the fact, but he would not condemn the woman for the sin, because that was not his office: *He was not sent into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through him might be saved, John 3. 17.* Now if Christ, though urged to it, would not condemn the guilty woman, though she was far at present from coming to him, he would not that they should once think, that

that he will cast them out, that in truth are coming to him: *And him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out.*

3. Christ plainly bids the turning sinner come: and forbids him to entertain any such thought, as that he will cast him out. *Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; and let him turn unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him: and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon, Is. 55. 7.*

The Lord, by bidding the unrighteous forsake his thoughts, doth in special forbid, as I have said, viz. those thoughts that hinder the coming man in his progress to Jesus Christ, his unbelieving thoughts.

Therefore, he bids him not only forsake his ways but his thoughts: *Let the wicked forsake his ways, and the unrighteous man his thoughts.* It is not enough to forsake one if thou wilt come to Jesus Christ because the other will keep thee from him. Suppose a man forsake his wicked ways, his debauched and filthy life; yet if these thoughts, that Jesus Christ will not receive him, be entertained and nourished in his heart; these thoughts will keep him from coming to Jesus Christ.

Sinner, coming sinner, Art thou for coming to Jesus Christ? Yes, says the sinner. Forsake thy wicked ways then. So I do, says the sinner. Why comest thou then so slowly? Because I am hindered. What hinders? Has God forbidden thee? No. Art thou not willing to come faster? Yes, yet I cannot. Well prithee be plain with me, and tell me the reason and ground of thy discouragement. Why (says the sinner) though God forbids me not, and though I am willing to come faster, yet there naturally ariseth this, and that, and the other thought in my heart, that hinders my speed to Jesus Christ. Sometimes I think I am not chosen; sometimes I think I am not called; sometimes I think I am come too late; and sometimes I think I know not what it is to come. Also one while I think I have no grace; and then again, that I cannot pray; and then again, I think that I am a very hypocrite. And these things keep me from coming to Jesus Christ.

Look ye now, did not I tell you so? There are thoughts yet remaining in the heart, even of those who have forsaken their wicked ways; and with those thoughts they are more plagued than with any thing else; because they hinder their coming to Jesus Christ, for the sin of unbelief (which is the original of all these thoughts) is that which besets a coming sinner more easily than do his ways, Heb. 12. 1,—4.

But now, since Jesus Christ commands thee to forsake these thoughts, forsake them, coming sinner; and if thou forsake them not, thou transgressest the commands of Christ, and abidest thine own tormentor, and keepest thyself from establishment in grace: *If ye will not believe, ye shall not be established*, Isa. 7. 9.

Thus you see how Jesus Christ setteth himself against such thoughts, that any way discourage the coming sinner; and thereby truly vindicates the doctrine we have in hand, to wit, That Jesus Christ would not have them, that in truth are coming to him, once think, that he will cast them out. *And him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out.*

I come now to the reasons of the observation.

1. If Jesus Christ should allow thee once to think, that he will cast thee out, he must allow thee to think, that he will falsify his word; for he hath said, *I will in no wise cast out.* But Christ would not that thou shouldst count him as one that will falsify his word; for he saith of himself, *I am the truth*; therefore he would not, that any that in truth are coming to him, should once think, that he will cast them out.

2. If Jesus Christ should allow the sinner, that in truth is coming to him, once to think that he will cast him out, then he must allow, and so countenance the first appearance of unbelief; the which he counteth his greatest enemy, and against which he has bent even his holy gospel. Therefore Jesus Christ would not, that they that in truth are coming to him, should once think that he will cast them out. See Matth. 14. 31.; & 21. 21.; Mark 11. 23.; Luke 24. 25.

3. If Jesus Christ should allow the coming sinner once to think, that he will cast him out; then he must allow him to make a question, Whether he is willing to receive his Father's gift; for the coming sinner is his Father's gift; as also says the text; but he testifieth, *All that the Father giveth him shall come to him; and him that cometh, he will in no wise cast out.* Therefore Jesus Christ would not have him, that in truth is coming to him, once to think, that he will cast him out.

4. If Jesus Christ should allow them once to think, (that indeed are coming to him), that he will cast them out, he must allow them to think, that he will despise and reject the drawing of his Father: For no man can come to him, but whom the Father draweth. But it would be high blasphemy, and damnable wickedness once to imagine thus. Therefore, Jesus Christ would not have him that cometh, once think that he will cast him out.

5. If Jesus Christ should allow those that indeed are coming to him, once to think that he will cast them out, he must allow them to think, that he will be unfaithful to the trust and charge that his Father hath committed to him; which is to save, and not to lose any thing of that which he hath given unto him to save, John 6. 36. But the Father hath given him a charge, to save the coming sinner; therefore it cannot be, that he should allow, that such an one should once think, that he will cast him out.

6. If Jesus Christ should allow, that they should once think, that are coming to him, that he will cast them out, then he must allow them to think, that he will be unfaithful to his office of priesthood: for, as by the first part of it, he paid price for, and ransomed souls, so by the second part thereof, he continually maketh intercession to God for them that come, Heb. 7. 25. But he cannot allow us to question his faithful execution of his priesthood; therefore he cannot allow us once to think, that the coming sinner shall be cast out.

7. If Jesus Christ should allow us once to think, that

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that the coming sinner shall be cast out, then he must allow us to question his will, or power, or merit to save. But he cannot allow us once to question any of these; therefore not once to think, that the coming sinner shall be cast out.

(1.) He cannot allow us to question his will; for he saith in the text, *I will in no wise cast out.*

(2.) He cannot allow us to question his power; for the Holy Ghost saith, he is able to save to the utmost them that come.

(3.) He cannot allow us to question the efficacy of his merit; for the blood of Christ cleanseth the comers from all sin, 1 John 1.; therefore he cannot allow, that he that is coming to him should once think that he will cast them out.

8. If Jesus Christ should allow the coming sinner once to think, that he will cast him out, he must allow him to give the lie to the manifest testimony of the Father, Son, and Spirit; yea, to the whole gospel contained in Moses, the prophets, the book of Psalms, and that commonly called the *New Testament*. But he cannot allow of this; therefore, not that the coming sinner should once think, that he will cast him out.

9. Lastly, If Jesus Christ should allow him that is coming to him once to think, that he will cast him out, he must allow him to question his Father's oath which he in truth and righteousness hath taken, that they might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to Jesus Christ. But he cannot allow this, therefore he cannot allow, that the coming sinner should once think, that he will cast him out, Heb. 6.

I come now to make some general use and application of the whole, and so to draw towards a conclusion.

I. The first use, a use of information: and it informeth us, That men by nature are far off from Christ.

Let me a little improve this use, by speaking to these three questions.

1. Where is he that is coming to Jesus Christ?

2. What is he that is coming to Jesus Christ?

3. Whither

3. Whither is he to go that cometh not to Jesus Christ?

1. Where is he?

Ans. 1. He is far from God, he is without him, even alienate from him, both in his understanding, will, affections, judgement, and conscience, Eph. 2. 12.; chap. 4. 8.

2. He is far from Jesus Christ, who is the only deliverer of men from hell-fire, Psal. 73. 27.

3. He is far from the work of the Holy Ghost, the work of regeneration, and a second creation, without which no man shall see the kingdom of heaven, John 3. 3.

4. He is far from being righteous, that righteousness that should make him acceptable in God's sight, Isa. 46. 14.

5. He is under the power and dominion of sin: sin reigneth in and over him; it dwelleth in every faculty of his soul, and member of his body: so that from head to foot there is no place clean, Isa. 1. 6.; Rom. 3. 9.—18.

6. He is in the pest-house with Uzziah, and excluded the camp of Israel with the lepers, 2 Chron. 26. 21.; Numb. 5. 2.

7. His life is among the unclean: *He is in the gall of bitterness, and in the bond of iniquity*, Job 26. 14.; Acts 8. 23.

8. He is in sin, in the flesh, in death, in the snare of the devil, and is taken captive by him at his will, 1 Cor. 15. 17.; Rom. 8. 8.; 1 John 3. 14.; 2 Tim. 2. 26.

9. He is under the curse of the law, and the devils dwell in him, and hath the mastery of him, Gal. 3. 13.; Eph. 2. 2, 3.; Acts 26. 18.

10. He is in darkness, and walketh in darkness, and knows not whither he goes; for darkness has blinded his eyes.

11. He is in the broad way that leadeth to destruction; and holding on, he will assuredly go in at the broad gate, and so down the stairs to hell.

Secondly, What is he that cometh not to Jesus Christ,

1. He

Come, and welcome, to Jesus Christ.

1. He is counted one of God's enemies, Luke 19. 14.; Rom. 8. 7.

2. He is a child of the devil, and of hell: for the devil begat him, as to his sinful nature, and hell must swallow him at last, because he cometh not to Jesus Christ, John 8, 44.; 1 John 3. 8.; Matth. 23. 15.; Psal 9. 17.

3. He is a child of wrath, an heir of it; it is his portion, and God will repay it him to his face, Eph.

2. 1, 2, 3.; John 21. 29, 30, 31.

4. He is a self murderer; he wrongeth his own soul, and is one that loveth death, Prov. 1. 18.; & 8. 35, 36.

5. He is a companion for devils, and damned men, Prov. 21. 16. Matth. 25. 41.

Thirdly, Where is he like to go that cometh not to Jesus Christ?

1. He that cometh not to him, is like to go farther from him: for every sin is a step farther from Jesus Christ, Hof. 11.

2. As he is in darkness, so he is like to go on in it; for Christ is the light of the world, and he that comes not to him, walketh in darkness, John 8. 12.

3. He is like to be removed at last, as far from God and Christ, and heaven, and all felicity, as an infinite God can remove him, Matth. 12. 41,

But, secondly, This doctrine of coming, to Christ, informeth us, where poor destitute sinners may find life for their souls, and that is in Christ. This life is in his Son; he that hath the Son, hath life. And again, *Whofo findeth me, findeth life, and shall obtain favour of the Lord*, Prov. 8.

Now, for farther enlargement, I will also here propound three more questions.

1. What life is in Christ?

2. Who may have it?

3. Upon what terms?

First, What life is in Jesus Christ?

1. There is justifying life in Christ. Man by sin is dead in law: and Christ only can deliver him by his

his righteousness and blood from this death into a state of life: For God sent his Son into the world, that we might live through him, 1 John 6. 9.; that is, through the righteousness which he should accomplish, and the death that he should die.

2. There is eternal life in Christ: Life that is endless; life for ever and ever. He hath given us eternal life, and this life is in his Son, 1 John 5.

Now, justification and eternal salvation being both in Christ, and no where else to be had for men, who would not come to Jesus Christ?

Secondly, Who may have this life?

I answer, poor, helpless, miserable sinners. Particularly,

1. Such as are willing to have it: *Whosoever will, let him take of the water of life*, Rev 22. 17.

2. He that thirsteth for it: *I will give to him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life*, Rev. 21. 6.

3. He that is weary of his sins: *This is the rest, whereby you may cause the weary to rest; and this is the refreshing*, Isa. 28. 12.

4. He that is poor and needy: *He shall spare the poor and needy, and shall save the souls of the needy*.

5. He that followeth after him, crieth for life: *He that follows me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life*, John 8. 12.

Thirdly, Upon what terms may he have this life?

Ans. Freely, Sinner, dost thou hear? Thou mayst have it freely. Let him take the water of life freely. I will give him of the fountain of the water of life freely: *And when they had nothing to pay, he freely forgave them both*, Luke 7.

Freely, without money, or without price: *Ho! Every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters; and he that hath no money, come buy and eat: Yea, come, buy wine and milk, without money and without price*, Isa. 55. 1.

Sinner, art thou thirsty? art thou weary? art thou willing? Come then, and regard not your stuff; for all the good that is in Christ is offered to the coming

sinner without money and without price. He has life to give away to such as want it, and that have not a penny to purchase it; and he will give it freely. Oh, what a blessed condition is the coming sinner in!

But, thirdly, This doctrine of coming to Jesus Christ for life, informeth us, that it is to be had no where else. Might it be had any where else, the text, and him that spoke it, would be but little set by; for what great matter is there in, *I will in no wise cast out*, if another stood by that would receive them? But here appears the glory of Christ, that none but he can save. And here appears his love, that though none can save but he, yet he is not coy in saving. *But him that comes to me*, saith he, *I will in no wise cast out*.

That none can save but Jesus Christ, is evident from Acts 4. 12. *Neither is there salvation in any other; and he hath given us eternal life, and this life is in his Son*. If life could have been had any where else, it should have been in the law: But it is not in the law; for by the deeds of the law, no man living shall be justified; and if not justified, then no life.

Therefore life is no where to be had, but in Jesus Christ, Gal. 3.

Quest. But why would God so order it, that life should be had no where else but in Jesus Christ?

Ans. There is reason for it, and that both with respect to God and us.

First, With respect to God,

1. That it might be in a way of justice, as well as mercy: And in a way of justice it could not have been, if it had not been by Christ; because he, and he only, was able to answer the demand of the law, and give for sin what the justice thereof required. All angels had been crushed down to hell for ever, had that curse been laid upon them for our sins, which was laid upon Jesus Christ; but it was laid upon him, and he bare it; and answered the penalty, and redeemed his people from under it, with that satisfaction to divine justice, that God himself doth now proclaim, That he is faithful and just to forgive us, if

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by faith we shall venture to Jesus, and trust to what he has done for life, Rom. 3. 24, 25, 26.; John 1. 9.

2. Life must be by Jesus Christ, that God might be adored and magnified for finding out this way. This is the Lord's doings, that in all things he might be glorified through Jesus Christ our Lord.

3. It must be by Jesus Christ, that life might be at God's dispose, who hath great pity for the poor, the lowly, the meek, the broken in heart, and for them that others care not for, Psal. 34. 6.; & 138. 6.; & 25.; & 51. 17.; & 147. 3.

4. Life must be in Christ, to cut off boasting from the lips of men. This also is the apostle's reason, in Rom. 3. 20, 27.; and Eph. 2. 8, 9, 10.

Secondly, Life must be in Jesus Christ with respect to us,

1. That we might have it upon the easiest terms, to wit, freely; as a gift, not as wages. Was it in Moses's hand, we should come hardly at it. Was it in the people's hand, we should pay soundly for it. But thanks be to God it is in Christ, laid up in him, and by him to be communicated to sinners upon easy terms, even for receiving, accepting, and embracing with thanksgiving; as the scriptures plainly declare, 1 John 1. 11, 12.; 2 Cor. 11. 4.; Heb. 11. 13.; Col. 3. 13, 14, 15.

2. Life is in Christ for us, that it might not be upon so brittle a foundation, as indeed it would, had it been any where else. The law itself is weak because of us, as to this: But Christ is a tried stone, a sure foundation, one that will not fail to bear thy burden, and to receive thy soul, coming sinner.

3. Life is in Christ, that it might be sure to all the seed. Alas! the best of us, was life left in our hands to be sure we should forfeit it, over, and over, and over: or, was it in any other hand, we should by our often backslidings so offend him, that at last he would shut up his bowels in everlasting displeasure against us. But now it is in Christ; it is with one that can pity, pray for, pardon, yea, multiply pardons; it is with one that can have compassion upon us, when we

are out of the way, with one that hath an heart to fetch us again, when we are gone astray; with one that can pardon without upbraiding. Blessed be God that life is in Christ! For now it is sure to all the seed.

But, fourthly, This doctrine of coming to Jesus Christ for life, informs us of the evil of unbelief; that wicked thing that is the only or chief hindrance to the coming sinner. Doth the text say, *Come*? Doth it say, *And him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out*? Then what an evil is that that keepeth sinners from coming to Jesus Christ? And that evil is unbelief: for by faith we come; by unbelief we keep away. Therefore it is said to be that by which a soul is said to depart from God: because it was that which at first caused the world to go off from him, and that also, that keeps them from him to this day. And it doth it the more easily, because it doth it with a wile.

This sin may be called *the white devil*, for it oftentimes, in its mischievous doing in the soul, shews as if it was an angel of light: yea, it acteth like a counsellor of heaven. Therefore, a little to discourse of this evil disease.

1. It is that sin, above all others, that hath some shew of reason in its attempts. For it keeps the soul from Christ, by pretending its present unfitness and unpreparedness: as want of more sense of sin, want of more repentance, want of more humility, want of a more broken heart.

2. It is the sin that most suiteth with the conscience: the conscience of the coming sinner tells him, that he hath nothing good; that he stands inditeable for ten thousand talents; that he is a very ignorant, blind, and hard-hearted sinner, unworthy to be once taken notice of by Jesus Christ: And will you (says Unbelief) in such a case as you now are, presume to come to Jesus Christ?

3. It is the sin that most suiteth with our sense of feeling. The coming sinner feels the workings of sin, of all manner of sin and wretchedness in his flesh: he also feels the wrath and judgement of God due to sin
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and oft-times staggers under it. Now, says Unbelief, you may see you have no grace; for that which works in you is corruption. You may also perceive that God doth not love you, because the sense of his wrath abides upon you. Therefore, how can you bear the face to come to Jesus Christ.

4. It is that sin above all others that most suiteth the wisdom of our flesh. The wisdom of our flesh thinks it prudence to question a-while, to stand back a-while, to hearken to both sides a-while; and not to be rash, sudden, or unadvised, in too bold a presuming upon Jesus Christ. And this wisdom Unbelief falls in with.

5. It is the sin above all other, that continually is whispering the soul in the ear with mistrusts of the faithfulness of God, in keeping promise to them that come to Jesus Christ for life. It also suggests mistrusts about Christ's willingness to receive it, and save it. And no sin can do this so artificially as unbelief.

6. It is also that sin which is always at hand to enter an objection against this or that promise, that by the Spirit of God is brought to our heart to comfort us; and if the poor coming sinner is not aware of it, it will by some exaction, slight, trick, or cavil, quickly wrest from him the promise again, and he shall have but little benefit of it.

7. It is that above all other sins, that weakens our prayers, our faith, our love, our diligence, our hope, and expectations: it even taketh the heart away from God in duty.

8. Lastly, This sin, as I have said even now, it appears in the soul with so many sweet pretences to safety and security, that it is, as it were, counsel sent from heaven; bidding the soul be wise, wary, considerate, well advised, and to take heed of too rash a venture upon believing. Be sure, first, that God loves you; take hold of no promise until you are forced by God unto it; neither be you sure of your salvation; doubt it still, though the testimony of the Lord has been often confirmed in you. Live not by faith, but by sense; and when you can neither see
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nor feel, then fear and mistrust, then doubt and question all. This is the devilish counsel of Unbelief, which is so covered over with specious pretences, that the wisest Christian can hardly shake off these reasonings.

But to be brief: Let me here give the Christian reader a more particular description of the qualities of unbelief, by opposing faith unto it, in these twenty-five particulars.

1. Faith believeth the word of God, but unbelief questioneth the certainty of the same, Psal. 106. 24.

2. Faith believeth the word, because it is true, but unbelief doubteth thereof, because it is true, 1 Tim. 4. 3.; John 8. 45.

3. Faith sees more in a promise of God to help, than in all other things to hinder; but unbelief, notwithstanding God's promise, saith, How can these things be? Rom. 4. 19, 20, 21.; 2 Kings 7. 2.; John 3. 11, 12.

4. Faith will make thee see love in the heart of Christ, when with his mouth he giveth reproofs; but unbelief will imagine wrath in his heart, when with his mouth and word he saith he loves us, Matth. 15. 22,—29.; Numb. 13. 2.; 2 Chron. 14. 3.

5. Faith will help the soul to wait, though God defers to give; but unbelief will take snuff and throw up all, if God makes any tarrying, Psal. 25. 5.; Isa. 8. 17.; 2 Kings 6. 33.; Psal. 100. 13. 14.

6. Faith will give comfort in the midst of fears; but unbelief causeth fears in the midst of comforts, 2 Chron. 20. 20, 21.; Matth. 8. 26; Luke 24. 26.

7. Faith will suck sweetness out of God's rod; but unbelief can find no comfort in his greatest mercies, Psal. 23. 1.; Numb. 12.

8. Faith maketh great burdens light; but unbelief maketh light ones intolerable heavy, Mal. 1. 12, 13.

9. Faith helpeth us when we are down: but unbelief throws us down when we are up, Micah 7. 8, 9, 10.; Heb. 4. 11.

10. Faith bringeth us near to God, when we are far from him; but unbelief puts us far from God when

We are near to him, Heb. 10. 22.; & 3. 12, 13.

11. Where faith reigns, it declareth them to be the friends of God; but where unbelief reigns, it declareth them to be his enemies, James 5. 23.; Heb. 3. 18.; Rev. 21. 8.

12. Faith putteth a man under grace; but unbelief holdeth him under wrath, Rom. 2. 24, 25, 26. & 14. 16.; Ephes. 2. 8.; John 3. 36.; 1 John 5. 10. Heb. 3. 17.; Mark 16. 16.

13. Faith purifieth the heart; but unbelief keepeth it polluted and impure, Acts 15. 9.; Tit. 1. 15, 16.

14. By faith the righteousness of Christ is imputed to us; but by unbelief we are shut up under the law to perish, Rom. 4. 23, 24.; & 11. 32. Gal. 3. 23.

15. Faith maketh our work acceptable to God through Christ; but whatsoever is of unbelief is sin: For without faith it is impossible to please him, Heb. 11. 4.; Rom. 14. 23.; Heb. 11. 6.

16. Faith giveth us peace and comfort in our souls but unbelief worketh trouble and tossings, like the restless waves of the sea, Rom. 5. 1.; James 6. 1.

17. Faith maketh us see preciousness in Christ, but unbelief sees no form, beauty, or comeliness in him, 1 Pet. 2.; Isa. 53. 1, 2, 3.

18. By faith we have our life in Christ's fulness; but by unbelief we starve and pine away, Gal. 2. 20.

19. Faith gives us the victory over the law, sin, death, the devil, and all evils; but unbelief layeth us obnoxious to them all, 1 John 5. 4.; Luke 12. 46.

20. Faith will shew us more excellency in things not seen, than in them that are; but unbelief sees more in things that are, than in things that will be hereafter, 2 Cor 4. 18.; Heb. 11. 24.—27.; 1 Cor. 15. 32.

21. Faith makes the ways of God pleasant and admirable; but unbelief maketh them heavy and hard, Gal. 5. 6.; 1 Cor. 12. 10. 11.; John 6. 60.; Psal. 2. 3.

22. By faith Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, possessed the land of promise; but because of unbelief, neither Aaron,

Aaron,

Aaron, nor Moses, nor Miriam, could get thither, Heb. 11. 9.; & 3. 19.

23. By faith the children of Israel passed through the Red sea, but by unbelief the generality of them perished in the wilderness, Heb. 11. 29.; Jude 5.

24. By faith Gideon did more with with three hundred men, and a few empty pitchers, than all the twelve tribes could do, because they believed not God, Judges 7. 16.—22.; Numb. 14. 11, 14.

25. By faith Peter walked on the water; but by unbelief he began to sink, Matth 14. 21.—24.

Thus might many more be added, which, for brevity's sake, I omit; beseeching every one that thinketh he hath a soul to save, or be damned, to take heed of unbelief; lest seeing there is a promise left us of entering into his rest, any of us by unbelief should indeed come short of it.

II. The second use; a use of examination.

We come to a use of examination. Sinner, thou hast heard of the necessity of coming to Christ; also of the willingness of Christ to receive the coming soul; together with the benefit that they by him shall have, that indeed come to him. Put thyself now upon this serious enquiry, Am I indeed come to Jesus Christ?

Motives plenty I might here urge, to prevail with thee to a conscientious performance of this duty: As,

1. Thou art in sin, in the flesh, in death, in the snare of the devil, and under the curse of the law, if you are not coming to Jesus Christ.

2. There is no way to be delivered from these, but by coming to Jesus Christ.

3. If thou comest, Jesus Christ will receive thee, and will in no wise cast thee out.

4. Thou wilt not repent it in the day of judgement if thou now comest to Jesus Christ.

5. But thou wilt surely mourn at last, if now thou shalt refuse to come. And,

6. Lastly, Now thou hast been invited to come; now will thy judgement be greater, and thy damnation more fearful, if thou shalt yet refuse, than if thou hadst never heard of coming to Christ.

Obj. But we hope we are come to Jesus Christ.

Ans. It is well if it proves so. But lest thou shouldst speak without ground, and so fall unawares into hell-fire, let us examine a little.

First, Art thou indeed coming to Jesus Christ? What hast thou left behind thee? What didst thou come away from, in thy coming to Jesus Christ?

When Lot came out of Sodom, he left the Sodomities behind him, Gen. 19.

When Abraham came out of Chaldea, he left his country and kindred behind him, Gen. 12.; Acts 7.

When Ruth came to put her trust under the wings of the Lord God of Israel, she left her father and mother, her gods, and the land of her nativity, behind her, Ruth 1. 15, 16, 17.; & 2. 11, 12.

When Peter came to Christ, he left his nets behind him, Matth. 6. 18.

When Zaccheus came to Christ, he left the receipt of custom behind him, Luke 18.

When Paul came to Christ, he left his own righteousness behind him, Phil 3. 7, 8.

When those that used curious arts came to Jesus Christ, they took their curious books and burned them though in another man's eye they were counted worth fifty thousand pieces of silver, Acts 19. 18, 19, 20.

What sayst thou, man? Hast thou left thy darling sins, thy Sodomitish pleasures, thy acquaintance and vain companions, thy unlawful gain; thy idol Gods thy righteousness, and thy unlawful curious arts, behind thee? If any of these be with thee, and thou with them, in thy heart and life, thou art not yet come to Jesus Christ.

Secondly, Art thou come to Jesus Christ? Prithee tell me, what moved thee to come to Jesus Christ? Men do not usually come or go, to this or that place, before they have a moving cause, or rather a cause moving them thereto: No more do they come to Jesus Christ (I do not say before they have a cause, but) before that cause moveth them to come. What sayst thou? Hast thou a cause moving thee to come? To be at present in a state of condemnation, is cause
3 B sufficient

sufficient for men to come to Jesus Christ for life: But that will not do, except the cause move them; the which it will never do until their eyes be opened to see themselves in that condition. For it is not a man's being under wrath, but his seeing it, that moveth him to come to Jesus Christ. Alas! all men by sin are under wrath; yet but few of that all come to Jesus Christ: And the reason is, because they do not see their condition. *Who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come?* Mat. 3. 7. Until men are warned, and also receive the warning, they will not come to Jesus Christ.

Take three or four instances for this.

1. Adam and Eve came not to Jesus Christ until they received the alarm, the conviction of their undone state by sin, Gen. 3.

2. The children of Israel cried not out for a mediator, before they saw themselves in danger of death by the law, Exod. 20. 18, 19.

3. Before the publican came, he saw himself lost and undone, Luke 18. 13.

4. The prodigal came not, until he saw death at the door, ready to devour him, Luke 15. 17, 18

5. The three thousand came not, until they knew not what to do to be saved, Acts 2. 37, 38, 39.

5. Paul came not, until he saw himself lost and undone, Acts 9. 3.—11.

7 Lastly, Before the jailor came, he saw himself undone, Acts 16. 29, 30, 31. And I tell thee, it is an easier thing to persuade a well man to go to the physician for cure, or a man without hurt to seek a plaister to cure him, than it is to persuade a man that sees not his soul-disease, to come to Jesus Christ. The whole have no need of a physician; then why should they go to him? The full pitcher can hold no more; then why should it go to the fountain? And if thou comest full, thou comest not aright; and be sure, Christ will send thee empty away: *But he healeth the broken in heart, and bindeth up their wounds,* Mark 2. 17.; Psal. 47. 3; Luke 1. 2, 3.

Thirdly, Art thou coming to Jesus Christ? Prithee
tell

tell me, What seest thou in him to allure thee to forsake all the world, to come to him? I say, What hast thou seen in him? Men must see somewhat in Jesus Christ, else they will not come to him.

1. What comeliness hast thou seen in his person? thou comest not, if thou seest no form, nor comeliness in him, Isa. 53. 1, 2, 3.

2. Until those mentioned in the Song were convinced that there was more beauty, comeliness, and desirableness in Christ, than in ten thousand, they did not so much as ask where he was, nor incline to turn aside after him, Song 5.; chap 6.

There be many things on this side heaven that can and do carry away the heart; and so will do, so long as thou livest, if thou shalt be kept blind, and not be admitted to see the beauty of the Lord Jesus.

Fourthly, Art thou come to the Lord Jesus? what hast thou found in him, since thou camest to him?

Peter found with him the word of eternal life, John 6. 68.

They that Peter makes mention of, found him a living stone, even such a living stone as communicated life to them, 1 Pet. 2.

He saith himself, they that come to him, &c. shall find rest unto their souls: hast thou found rest in him for thy soul? Matth. 11.

Let us go back to the times of the Old Testament.

1. Abraham found that in him, that made him leave his country for him, and become for his sake a pilgrim and stranger in the earth, Gen. 12.; Heb. 11.

2. Moses found that in him, that made him forsake a crown, a kingdom for him too.

3. David found so much in him, that he counted to be in his house one day was better than a thousand; yea, to be a door-keeper therein, was better in his esteem, than to dwell in the tents of wickedness, Psal. 84. 10.

4. What did Daniel and the three children find in him, to make them run the hazards of the fiery furnace, and the den of lions, for his sake? Dan. 23.; chap. 6.

Let us come down to martyrs.

1. Stephen found that in him, that made him joyful, and quietly yield up his life for his name, Acts 17.

2. Ignatius found that in him, that made him chuse to go through the torments of the devil, and hell itself; rather than not to have him, Acts and Monuments, vol. 4. pag. 25.

3. What saw Romanus in Christ, when he said to the raging Emperor, who threatened him with fearful torments, Thy sentence, O Emperor, I joyfully embrace, and refuse not to be sacrificed—by as cruel orments as thou canst invent? page 116.

4. What saw Menas the Egyptian in Christ, when he said, under most cruel torments, There is nothing in my mind that can be compared to the kingdom of heaven; neither is all the world, if it was weighed in a balance, to be preferred with the price of one soul? Who is able to separate us from the love of Jesus Christ our Lord? And I have learned of my Lord and king not to fear them that kill the body, &c. p. 117.

5. What did Eulaliah see in Christ, when she said, as they were pulling her one joint from another; Behold, O Lord, I will not forget thee: What a pleasure is it for them, O Christ! that remember thy triumphant victory? p. 121.

6. What think you did Agnes see in Christ, when rejoicingly she went to meet the soldier, that was appointed to be her executioner: I will willingly (said she) receive into my paps the length of this sword, and into my breast will draw the force thereof, even to the hilts; that thus I, being married to Christ my spouse, may surmount and escape all the darkness of this world? p. 122.

7. What do you think did Julitta see in Christ, when at the emperor's telling of her, That except she would worship the gods, she should never have protection, laws, judgements, nor life? She replied, farewell life, welcome death; farewell riches, welcome poverty. All that I have, if it were a thousand

hundred times more, would I give, rather than to speak one wicked and blasphemous word against my Creator, p. 123.

8. What did Marcus Arethius see in Christ, when after his enemies did cut his flesh, anointed it with honey, and hanged him up in a basket for flies and bees to feed on, he would not give (to uphold idolatry) one halfpenny to save his life? p. 119.

9. What did Constantine see in Christ, when he used to kiss the wounds of them that suffered for him? p. 135.

10. But what need I give thus particular instances of words and smaller actions, when by their lives, their blood, their enduring hunger, sword, fire, pulling asunder, and all torments that the devil and hell could devise, they shewed their love to Christ, after they were come to him?

What hast thou found in him, sinner?

What! come to Christ, and find nothing in him, (when all things that are worth looking for are in him)! or if any thing, yet not enough to wean thee from thy sinful delights, and fleshly lusts! Away; thou art not coming to Jesus Christ.

He that is come to Jesus Christ, hath found in him, that, as I said, that is not to be found any where else. As,

1. He that is come to Christ hath found God in him reconciling the world unto himself; not imputing their trespasses to them: And so God is not to be found in heaven and earth besides, 2 Cor. 5. 19, 20.

2. He that is come to Jesus Christ hath found in him a fountain of grace, sufficient, not only to pardon sin, but to sanctify the soul, and to preserve it from falling in this evil world.

3. He that is come to Jesus Christ hath found virtue in him, that virtue, that if he does but touch thee with his words, or thou him by faith, life is forthwith conveyed into thy soul: It makes thee wake as one that is waked out of his sleep; it awakes all the powers of the soul, Psal. 30. 11, 12.; Song 6. 12.

4. Art

4. Art thou come to Jesus Christ? Thou hast found glory in him, glory that surmounts and goes beyond. *Thou art more glorious than the mountains of prey,* Psal. 76. 4.

5. What shall I say? Thou hast found righteousness in him; thou hast found rest, peace, delight, heaven, glory, and eternal life.

Sinner, be advised; ask thy heart again; saying, Am I come to Jesus Christ? For upon this one question, Am I come, or, am I not? hangs heaven and hell as to thee. If thou canst say, I am come, and God shall approve that saying, happy, happy, happy man art thou! But if thou art not come, what can make thee happy? Yea, what can make that man happy, that for his not coming to Jesus Christ for life, must be damned in hell?

III. The third use; a use of encouragement.

Coming sinner, I have now a word for thee; be of good comfort, *He will in no wise cast out.* Of all men, thou art the blessed of the Lord; the Father hath prepared his Son to be a sacrifice for thee, and Jesus Christ, thy Lord, is gone to prepare a place for thee, John 1. 29.; Heb. 10.

What shall I say to thee? Thou comest to a full Christ; thou canst not want any thing, for soul or body, for this world or that to come, but it is to be had in or by Jesus Christ.

As it is said of the land that the Dapnites went to possess, so, and with much more truth it may be said of Christ, he is such an one with whom there is no want of any good thing that is in heaven or earth.

A full Christ is thy Christ.

1. He is full of grace. Grace is sometimes taken for love; never any loved like Jesus Christ. Jonathan's love went beyond the love of women; but the love of Christ passes knowledge. It is beyond the love of all the earth, of all creatures, even of men and angels. His love prevailed with him to lay aside his glory, to leave the heavenly place, to clothe himself with flesh, to be born in a stable, to be laid in a manger, to live a poor life in the world, to take u-

on him our sicknesses, infirmities, sins, curse, death, and the wrath that was due to man. And all this he did, for a base, undeserving, unthankful people; yea, for a people that was at enmity with him. For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. For scarcely for a righteous man will one die; yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die. But God commended his love towards us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved by his life. For if when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son; much more being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life, Rom. 5. 6,—10.

2. He is full of truth. Full of grace and truth. Truth, that is, faithfulness in keeping promise, even this of the text, (with all other), *I will in no wise cast out.* Hence it is said, that his words be true, and that he is the faithful God, that keepeth covenants. And hence it is also that his promises are called truth, *Thou wilt fulfil thy truth unto Jacob, and thy mercy unto Abraham, which thou hast sworn unto our fathers from the days of old.* Therefore it is said again, that both himself and words are truth, *I am the truth, the scriptures of truth, thy word is truth, thy law is truth, and my mouth, saith he, shall speak truth,* John 14. 6.; Dan. 10. 21.; John 17. 17.; 2 Sam. 7. 28.; Prov. 8. 7.; Psal. 119. 142.; Eccles. 12. 10.; Isa. 45. 1.; Mal. 2. 6.; Acts 26. 25.; 2 Tim. 2. 12, 13. Now I say, his word is truth, and he is full of truth to fulfil his truth, even to a thousand generations. Coming sinner, he will not deceive thee, come boldly to Jesus Christ.

3. He is full of wisdom: He is made unto us of God wisdom; wisdom to manage the affairs of his church in general, and the affairs of every coming sinner in particular. And upon this account he is said to be *head over all things*, 1 Cor. 1.; Ephes. 1.; because he manages all things that are in the world by his wisdom, for the good of his church: all men's actions, all Satan's temptations, all God's providences, and

and crosses, and disappointments; all things whatsoever are under the hand of Christ, (who is the wisdom of God), and he ordereth them all for good to his church: And can Christ help it, (and be sure he can), nothing shall happen or fall out in the world, but it shall, in despite of all opposition, have a good tendency to his church and people.

4. He is full of the Spirit, to communicate it to the coming sinner; he hath therefore received it without measure, that he may communicate it to every member of his body, according as every man's measure thereof is allotted him by the Father. Wherefore he saith, that he that comes to him, *Out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water*, John 3. 34. Tit. 3. 5, 6.; Acts 1.; John 7. 31,—38.

5. He is indeed a store-house full of all the graces of the Spirit. Of his fulness have all we received, and grace for grace: Here is more faith, more love, more sincerity, more humility, more of every grace; and of this, even more of this, he giveth to every lowly, humble, penitent, coming sinner: Wherefore, coming soul, thou comest not to a barren wilderness, when thou comest to Jesus Christ, John 1. 16.

6. He is full of bowels and compassion: and they shall feel and find it so that come to him for life. He can bear with thy weakness, he can pity thy ignorance, he can be touched with the feeling of thy infirmities, he can affectionately forgive thy transgressions, he can heal thy backslidings, and love thee freely. His compassions fail not; *and he will not break a bruised reed, nor quench the smoking flax: he can pity them that no eye pities, and be afflicted in all thy afflictions*, Matth. 26. 41.; Heb. 5. 2.; & 2. 18, 19. Matth. 9. 2.; Hos. 14. 4.; Ezek. 16. 5, 6.; Isa. 63. 9.; Psal. 78. 38.; & 86. 15.; & 111. 4.; & 112. 4.; Lam. 3. 22.

7. Coming soul, the Jesus that thou art coming to is full of might and terribleness for thy advantage: he can suppress all thine enemies; he is the prince of the kings of the earth; he can bow all men's desires for thy help; he can break all snares laid for thee

thee in the way; he can lift thee out of all difficulties, wherewith thou mayst be surrounded; he is wise in heart, and mighty in power. Every life under heaven is in his hand; yea, the fallen angels trembled before him: And he will save thy life, coming sinner, 1 Cor. 1. 24.; Rom. 8. 28.; Matth. 28. 18.; Rev. 15.; Psal. 19. 3.; & 27. 5, 6.; John 9. 4.; & 17. 2.; Matth. 8. 29.; Luke 8. 24.; James 2. 19.

8. Coming sinner, the Jesus to whom thou art coming is lowly in heart, he despiseth not any. It is not thy outward meanness, nor thy inward weakness, it is not because thou art poor, or base, or deformed, or a fool, that he will despise thee: he hath chosen the foolish, the base, and despised things of this world to confound the wise and mighty. He will bow his ear to thy stammering prayers; he will pick out the meaning of thy inexpressible groans; he will respect thy weakest offering, if there be in it but thy heart, Matth. 11. 20.; Luke 14. 21.; Prov. 9. 4, 5, 6.; Isa. 38. 14, 15.; Song 5. 15.; John 4. 27.; Mark 12. 33, 34.; James 5. 11.

Now is not this a blessed Christ, coming sinner? Art thou not like to fare well, when thou hast embraced him, coming sinner? But,

Secondly, Thou hast yet another advantage by Jesus Christ; thou art coming to him, for he is not only full but free. He is not sparing of what he has; he is open-hearted, and open-handed. Let me in a few particulars shew thee this:

1. This is evident, because he calls thee; he calls upon thee to come unto him: the which he would not do, was he not free to give; yea, he bids thee, when come, ask, seek, knock: And for thy encouragement adds to every command a promise, *Seek, and ye shall find; Ask, and ye shall have; Knock, and it shall be opened unto you.* If the rich man should say thus to the poor, would not he be reckoned a free-hearted man? I say, should he say to the poor, Come to my door, ask at my door, knock at my door, and you shall find and have; would he not be counted liberal? Why thus doth Jesus Christ. Mind it, com-

ing sinner, Isa. 4. 3 ; Psal. 50. 15.; Matth. 7. 7. 8.

2. He doth not only bid thee come, but tells thee, he will heartily do thee good ; yea, he will do it with rejoicing : *I will rejoyce over them, to do them good with my whole heart, and with my whole soul*, Jer. 32. 1.

3. It appears that he is free, because he giveth without twitting. He gives to all men liberally, and upbraideth not, James 1. 4. There are some that will not deny to do the poor a pleasure, but they will mix their mercies with so many twits, that the persons on whom they bestow their charity, shall find but little sweetness in it. But Christ doth not do so coming sinner : he casteth all thine iniquities behind his back ; thy sins and iniquities he will remember no more, Isa. 38. 17.; Heb. 8. 12.

4. That Christ is free, is manifest by the complaints that he makes against them that will not come to him for mercy. I say, he complains, saying, *O Jerusalem, Jerusalem ! How often would I have gathered thy children together, as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not !* Matth. 23. 37. I say, he speaks it by way of complaint. He saith also in another place, *But thou hast not called upon me, O Jacob*, Isa. 43. 22. Coming sinner, see here the unwillingness of Christ to save ; see here how free he is to communicate life, and all good things, to such as thou art : He complains, if thou comest not ; he is displeased, if thou callest not upon him.

Hark, coming sinner, once again ; when Jerusalem would not come to him for safeguard, he beheld the city, and wept over it, saying, *If thou hadst known even thou, at least in thy day, the things that belong to thy peace, but now they are hid from thine eyes*, Luke 19. 42.

5. Lastly, He is open and free-hearted to do thee good, as is seen by the joy and rejoicing that he manifesteth at the coming home of poor prodigals : He receives the lost sheep with rejoicing ; the lost goat with rejoicing ; yea, when the prodigal came home, what joy and mirth, what music and dancing, was in his Father's house ! Luke 15.

Thirdly,

Come, and welcome, to Jesus Christ.

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Thirdly, Coming sinner, I will add another encouragement for thy help.

1. God hath prepared a mercy-seat, a throne of grace to sit on: that thou mayst come thither to him, and that he may from thence hear thee, and receive thee: *I will commune with thee* saith he *from above the mercy-seat*, Exod. 25. 22.

As who shall say, sinner, When thou comest to me, thou shalt find me upon the mercy-seat, where also I am always found of the undone coming sinner: Thither I bring my pardon; there I hear and receive their petitions, and accept them to my favour.

2. God hath also prepared a golden altar for thee to offer thy prayers and tears upon. A golden altar! It is called a *golden altar*, to shew what worth it is of in God's account; for this golden altar is Jesus Christ; this altar sanctifies thy gift, and makes thy sacrifice acceptable. This altar then makes thy groans golden groans; thy tears golden tears, and thy prayers golden prayers, in the eye of that God thou comest to, coming sinner, Rev. 8.; Matth. 23. 19. Heb. 10. 10; 1 Pet. 2. 5.

3. God hath strewed all the way (from the gate of hell, where thou wast, to the gate of heaven, whither thou art going,) with flowers out of his own garden. Behold how the promises, invitations, calls, and encouragements, like lilies, lie round about thee! (take heed that thou dost not tread them under foot, sinner), with promises did I say? Yea, he hath mixed all those with his own name, his Son's name; also with the name of mercy, goodness, compassion, love, pity, grace, forgiveness, pardon, and what not, that may encourage the coming sinner.

4. He hath also for thy encouragement laid up the names, and set forth the sins of those that have been saved: In his book they are fairly written, that thou through patience and comfort of the scriptures mightest have hope.

1st, In this book is recorded Noah's maim and sin; and how God had mercy upon him.

2^{dly}, In this record is fairly written the name of

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Lot,

Lot, and the nature of his sin; and how the Lord had mercy upon him.

3dly, In this record thou hast also fairly written the names of Moses, Aaron, Gideon, Sampson, David, Solomon, Peter, Paul, with the nature of their sins, and how God had mercy upon them; and all to encourage thee, coming sinner.

Fourthly, I will add yet another encouragement for the man that is coming to Jesus Christ. Art thou coming? Art thou coming indeed? Why,

1. This thy coming is by virtue of God's call: Thou art called. Calling goes before coming: Coming is not of works, but of him that calleth. He went up into a mountain, and called to him whom he would, and they came to him, Mark 3. 13.

2. Art thou coming? This is also by the virtue of illumination: God has made thee see, and therefore thou art coming. So long as thou wast darkness, thou lovedst darkness, and couldst not abide to come, because thy deeds were evil; but being now illuminated and made to see, what and where thou art, and also what and where thy Saviour is, now thou art coming to Jesus Christ; *Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona; for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, saith Christ, but my Father which is in heaven,* Matth. 16. 15, 16.

3. Art thou coming? This is because God has inclined thine heart to come. God hath called thee, illuminated thee and inclined thy heart to come; and therefore thou comest to Jesus-Christ. It is God that worketh in thee to *will*, and to come to Jesus Christ. Coming sinner, bless God for that he hath given thee a *will* to come to Jesus Christ. It is a sign that thou belongest to Jesus Christ, because God has made thee willing to come to him, Psal. 110. 3. Bless God for *slaying* the enemy of thy mind; had he not done it, thou wouldst as yet have hated thine own salvation.

4. Art thou coming to Jesus Christ? *It is God that giveth thee power; power to pursue thy will in matters of thy salvation, is the gift of God. It is God that*
worketh

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worketh in you both to *will* and to *do*, Phil. 2. 13. Not that God worketh *will* to come, where he gives no power; but that thou shouldst take notice, that power is an additional mercy. The church saw that *will* and *power* were two things, when she cried, *Draw me, and we will run after thee*, (Song 1. 4.): and so did David too, when he said, *I will run the ways of thy commandments, when thou shalt enlarge my heart*. Will to come, and power to pursue thy will, is double mercy, coming sinner.

5. All thy strange, passionate, sudden rushings forward after Jesus Christ, (coming sinners know what I mean) they also are thy helps from God. Perhaps thou feelest at sometimes more than at others, strong stirrings up of heart to fly to Jesus Christ; now thou hast at this time a sweet and stiff gale of the Spirit of God, filling thy sails with the fresh gales of his good Spirit; and thou ridest at those times as upon the wings of the wind, being carried out beyond thyself, beyond the most of thy prayers, and also above all thy fears and temptations.

6. Coming sinner, hast thou not now and then a kiss of the sweet lips of Jesus Christ, I mean some blessed word dropping like a honey-comb upon thy soul to revive thee, when thou art in the midst of thy dumps?

7. Does not Jesus Christ sometimes give thee a glimpse of himself, though perhaps thou seest him not so long a time as while one may tell twenty?

8. Hast thou not sometimes as it were the very warmth of his wings overshadowing the face of thy soul, that gives thee as it were a gload upon thy spirit, as the bright beams of the sun do upon thy body, when it suddenly breaks out of a cloud, though presently all is gone away?

Well, all these things are the good hand of thy God upon thee, and they are upon thee to constrain to provoke, and to make thee willing and able to come, coming sinner, that thou mightest in the end be saved.

A dis-

A discourse upon the Pharisee and Publican.

Wherein several weighty things are handled ; as, the nature of prayer, and of obedience to the law ; together with the way and method of God's free grace in pardoning penitent sinners, by imputing Christ's righteousness to them.

To the R E A D E R.

Courteous Reader,

I Have made bold once again to present thee with some of my meditations ; and they are now about the Pharisee and the Publican ; two men in whose condition the whole is comprehended, both as to their state now, and condition at the judgement.

Wherefore, in reading this little book thou must needs read thyself. I do not say thou must understand thy condition ; for it is the gift of God must make thee do that. Howbeit, if God will bless it to thee, it may be a means to bring thee to see whose steps thou art treading, and so at whose end thou art like to arrive.

And let me beg this at thy hand, now thou art about to read ; reserve thy judgement or sentence as to me, until thou hast passed through the discourse.

Justification is treated of here, and the way for men to be saved.

I have also, O Publican, here, as my skill hath served me, for thy encouragement, set before thee the

the Pharisee and the Publican in their colours, and shewed thee, that though the Publican seemed to be far behind, yet in running he got the prize from the lofty Pharisee. I say, Art thou a Pharisee? here is a Pharisee for thee! Art thou a Publican? here is a Publican for thee!

God give thee the Publican's heart, if thou art in the Publican's sins, that thou mayst partake with the Publican, mercy.

So wilbeth thy friend,

JOHN BUNYAN.

A discourse upon the Pharisee and Publican.

Luke xviii. 10, 11, 12, 13. Two men went up into the temple to pray; the one a Pharisee and the other a Publican: The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, God, I thank thee, that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this Publican. I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all that I possess. And the Publican standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner.

IN the beginning of this chapter you read of the reason of the parable of the unjust judge and the poor widow; namely, to encourage men to pray. He spake a parable to this end, that men ought always to pray, and not to faint; and a most sweet parable

parable for that purpose it is: For if through importunity a poor widow-woman may prevail with an unjust judge, and so consequently with an unmerciful and hard-hearted tyrant, how much more shall the poor, afflicted, distressed, and tempted people of God, prevail with, and obtain mercy at the hands of a loving, just, and merciful God! The unjust judge would not hearken to, nor regard the cry of the poor widow, for a while: *But afterwards he said within himself, Though I fear not God, nor regard man; yet because this widow troubleth me, I will avenge her, lest by her continual coming she weary me.* Hark, saith Christ, what the unjust judge saith. And shall not God avenge his own elect, which cry unto him day and night? I tell you he will avenge them speedily.

This is therefore a very comfortable parable to such of the saints that are under hard usages by reason of evil men, their might and tyranny: For by it we are taught to believe and expect, that God, though for a while he seemeth not to regard, yet will, in due time and season, arise and set such in safety from them that puff at them, Psal. 12. 5.

Let the good Christian pray always; let him pray, and not faint at seeming delays; for if the widow by importunity prevailed with the unjust judge, how much more shall he with his heavenly Father. I tell you, says Christ, he will avenge them speedily.

But now, forasmuch as this parable reacheth not (so directly) the poor Publican in the text, therefore our Lord begins again, and adds to that other parable, this parable which I have chosen for my text; by which he designeth two things: First, The conviction of the proud and self-conceited Pharisee: Secondly, The raising up and healing of the cast down and dejected Publican. And observe it, as by the

the first parable he chiefly designeth the relief of those that are under the hands of cruel tyrants, so by this he designeth the relief of those that lie under the load and burden of a guilty and disquieted conscience.

This therefore is a parable that is full of singular comfort to such of the sinners in this world that are clogged with guilt, and sense of sin; and that lie under the apprehensions of, and that are driven to God by the sense of the judgment that for sin is due upon them.

In my handling of this text, I shall have respect to these things.

1. To the persons in the text.
2. To the condition of the persons in the text.
3. To the conclusion that Christ makes upon them both.

First, For the persons. They were, as you see, far one from another in their own apprehension of themselves; one good, the other bad; but yet in the judgment of the law, both alike, both the same, both sinners; for they both stood in need of mercy. True, the first mentioned did not see it, as the other poor sinner did; but that altereth not the case: He that is in the judgement of the law a sinner, is in the judgement of the law for sin condemned, though in his own judgement he be never so righteous.

Men must not be judged, or justified, according to what themselves do think, but according to the verdict and sentence that cometh out of the mouth of God about them. Now, the sentence of God is, *All have sinned: There is none righteous, no not one*, Rom.

3. It is no matter then, what the Pharisee did think of himself; God by his word hath proclaimed him a sinner: a sinner, by reason of original sin; a sinner, by reason of actual transgression. Personally, therefore, with reference to the true nature of their state, they both were sinners, and both by the law under condemnation. True, the Publican's leprosy was outward; but the Pharisee's leprosy was inward; his heart, his soul, his spirit, was as foul, and had as much the plague of sin, as had the other in his life or conversation.

Secondly, As to their conditions, (I do not mean by condition, so much a habit of mind, as the state that they had each of them put themselves into by that mind), *The one*, says the text, *was a Pharisee, the other a Publican.* A Pharisee; that is, one that hath chosen to himself such a course of life. A Publican; that is one that hath chosen to himself such a course of life. These terms therefore, shew the divers courses of life that they had put themselves into. The Pharisee, as he thought, had put himself into a condition for heaven and glory; but the Publican was for this world and his lusts. Wherefore when the Pharisee stands in the temple, he boasteth of himself and good condition, but condemneth the Publican, and bitterly inveigheth against him. But, as I said, their personal state, by the law, was not at all changed. The Pharisee made himself never the better; the Publican also abode in his place.

Indeed the Publican is here found to recant, and repent of his condition, and of the condition that he had put himself into; and the Pharisee to boast of his. But the Publican's repentance was not of himself, but of God, who can also, yea, and sometimes it is evident (Acts 9.) he doth make Pharisees also repent of that condition that they have chosen to be in themselves, Phil. 3. 3,—8. The Pharisee therefore, in commending of himself, makes himself never the better; the Publican also, in condemning himself, makes himself never the worse. Nay, contrariwise, the Pharisee, by commending of himself, makes himself much the worse, ver. 14.; and the Publican, by condemning of himself, makes himself much the better. *I tell you, says Christ, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other: For every one that exalteth himself, shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself, shall be exalted.*

But, I say, as to mens commending of themselves, yea, though others should commend them also, that availeth, to Godward, nothing at all. *For not he that commendeth himself is approved, but whom the Lord commendeth.* So then, *Men in measuring of themselves*

selves, by themselves, and comparing themselves among themselves, are not wise, 1 Cor. 10. 12.

Now, this was the way of the Pharisee; I am not, saith he, as other men: I am no extortioner, nor unjust, no adulterer, nor yet as this Publican:

Two men went into the temple to pray; and they two, as I said, as opposite one to the other, as any two men that ever went thither to pray. One of them was over righteous, and the other wicked over much. Some would have thought, had they not by the word of Christ been otherwise described, that they had been both of the same religion; for they both went up into the temple to pray, yea, both to pray, and that at the same time, as if they did it by appointment, by agreement; but there was no such thing. The one was a Pharisee, the other a Publican, for so saith the after words; and therefore persons as opposite as light and darkness, as fire and water; I mean, as to their apprehensions one of another. The Pharisee could not abide the Publican, nor could the Publican brook the Pharisee; and yet both went up into the temple to pray. It is strange to see, and yet it is seen, that men cross in their minds, cross in their principles, cross in their apprehensions, yea, and cross in their prayers too, should yet meet together in the temple to pray.

Two men; men not of the middle sort, and them too picked out of the best and worst that was: Two men, a Pharisee and a Publican.

To be a Pharisee was in those days counted honourable for religion, and for holiness of life. A Pharisee was a man of esteem and repute among the Jews, though it is a term of reproach with us; else Paul would not at such a time as he did it, have said, *Men and brethren, I am a Pharisee, the son of a Pharisee, Acts 23. 6.; Phil. 3. 5.* For now he stood upon his purgation and justification, especially it appears so by the place first named. And far be it from any to think, that Paul would make use of a colour of wickedness, to save thereby himself from the fury of the people.

A Publican was in those days counted one of the vilest of men, as is manifest; because when they are in the word, by way of discrimination, made mention of, they are ranked with the most vile and base; therefore they are joined with sinners. *He eateth with Publicans and sinners, and with harlots, Publicans and harlots enter into the kingdom of heaven.* Yea, when our Lord Christ would have the rebellious professor stigmatized to purpose, he saith, *Let him be to thee as an Heathen man and a Publican.*

We therefore can make no judgement of men upon the outward appearance of them. Who would have thought, but that the Pharisee had been a good man? for he was righteous, for he prayed. And who could have thought, that the other had been a good man? for he was a Publican; a man, by good men and bad men, joined with the worst of men, to wit, with sinners, harlots, Heathens.

The Pharisee was a sectarian; the Publican was an officer. The Pharisee, even because he was a sectarian, was had the more in esteem; and the Publican, because he was an officer, was had the more in reproach. To speak a little to both these:

1. The Pharisee was a sectarian; one that deviated, that turned aside in his worshipping, from the way of God, both in matter and manner of worship; for such an one I count a sectarian. That he turned aside from the matter, which is the rule of worship, to wit, the written word, it is evident; for Christ saith, *That they rejected the commandments of God, and made them of no effect, that they might keep their own traditions.* That they turned aside also as to their manner of worship, and became sectarians, there is with no less authority asserted; *For all their works they do for to be seen of men,* Acts 26. 5.; Mark 7. 9,—14.; Matth. 23. 5.

Now, this being none of the order or ordinance of Christ, and yet being chose by, and stuck to of these sort of men, and also made a singular and necessary part of worship, became a sect, or bottom for these hypocritical factious men to adhere unto, and to make

of others disciples to themselves. And that they might be admired, and rendered venerable, by the simple people to their fellows, they loved to go in long robes; they loved to pray in markets, and in the corners of the streets; they shewed great zeal for the small things of the law, but had only great words for things that were substantial. *They made broad their phylacteries, and enlarged the borders of their garments,* Matth. 23.

When I say the Pharisee was a sectarian, I do not mean that every sectarian is a Pharisee. There was the sect of the Herodians, and of the Alexandrians, of the Sadducees, with many others; but to be a Pharisee, was to be of the strictest sect: After the most strictest sect of our religion I lived a Pharisee. That therefore of all the sects was the most strait and strict. Therefore, saith he, in another place, *I was taught according to the perfect manner of the law of the fathers.* And again, *Touching the law, a Pharisee,* Acts 22. 3.; and 26. 4, 5, 6.; Phil. 3. 5. The Pharisees therefore did carry the bell, and wear the garland for religion; for he out-did, he went beyond all other sectarians in his day. He was strictest, he was the most zealous; therefore Christ, in his making of this parable, waveth all other sects then in being, and pitched upon the Pharisee as the man most meet, by whose rejection he might shew forth and demonstrate the riches of his mercy in its extension to sinners: *Two men went up into the temple to pray, the one a Pharisee; such a brave man as you have heard.*

2. The Publican also went up thither to pray. The Publican, I told you before, was an officer; an officer that served the Romans and themselves too; for the Romans at that time were possessors of the land of Jewry, (the lot of Israel's inheritance), and the Emperor Tiberius Cæsar placed over that land four governors, to wit, Pilate, Herod, Philip, and Lyfanius; all these were Gentiles, Heathens, Infidels; and the Publicans were a sort of inferior men, to whom was let out to farm, and so men that were employed

employed by these to gather up the taxes and customs that the Heathens had laid upon the Jews to be paid to the Emperor, Luke 2. 1.; & 3. 1, 2, 12, 13.

But they were a generation of men that were very injurious in the execution of their office. They would exact and demand more than was due of the people; yea, and if their demands were denied, they would falsely accuse those that so denied them to the governor, and by false accusation obtain the money of the people, and so wickedly enrich themselves, (Luke 3. 13.; chap. 19. 2, 8.). This was therefore grievous to the Jews, who always counted themselves a free people, and could never abide to be in bondage to any. And this was something of the reason, that they were so generally by all the Jews counted so vile and base, and reckoned among the worst of men, even as our informers and bum bailiffs are with us at this day.

But that which heightened the spirit of the people against them, and that made them so odious and filthy in their eyes, was for that (at least so I think) these publicans were not, as the other officers, aliens, Heathens, and Gentiles, but men of their own nation, Jews, and so the brethren of those that they so abused. Had they been Gentiles, it had not been wondered at.

The Publican then was a Jew, a kind of a renegade Jew, that through the love that he had to unjust gains, fell off in his affections from his brethren, adhered to the Romans, and became a kind of servant to them against their brethren, farming the Heathenish taxations at the hand of strangers, and exacting of them upon their brethren with much cruelty, falsehood, and extortion. And hence, as I said, it was, that to be a Publican, was to be so odious a thing, so vile a sinner, and so grievous a man in the eyes of the Jews. Why! this was the Publican, he was a Jew, and so should have abode with them, and have been content to share with his brethren in their calamities; but contrary to nature, to
law,

law, to religion, reason, and honesty, he fell in with the Heathen, and took the advantage of their tyranny to pole, to rob, and impoverish his brethren.

But for proof that the Publican was a Jew.

1. They are, even then, when compared with, yet distinguished from the Heathen; *Let him be to thee as an Heathen man and a Publican*, Matth. 18. which two terms, I think, must not here be applied to one and the self-same man, as if the Heathen was a Publican, or the Publican a Heathen, but to men of two distinct nations; as that Publican and harlot, is to be understood of sinners of both sexes. The Publican is not an harlot, for he is a man, &c. and such a man as has been described before. So by Publicans and Sinners, is meant by Publicans, and such sinners as the Gentiles were; or such as, by the text the Publican is distinguished from; Where the Pharisee, saith he, was not an extortioner, unjust, adulterer, or even as this Publican. Nor can he (by Heathen man) intend the person, and by the term Publican, the office or place of the Heathen man; but by Publican is meant the renegade Jew, in such a place, &c. as is yet further manifest by that which follows, For,

2. Those Publicans, even every one of them that by name are made mention of in the New Testament have such names put upon them; yea, and other circumstances thereunto annexed, as doth demonstrate them to be Jews. I remember the names of no more but three, to wit, Matthew, Levi, and Zaccheus, and they were all Jews.

(1. Matthew was a Jew, and the same Matthew was a Publican; yea, also afterward an apostle. He was a Jew, and wrote his gospel in Hebrew: he was an apostle, and is therefore found among the twelve. That he was a Publican too, is as evident by his own words: For though Mark and Luke, in their mentioning of his name and apostleship, do forbear to call him a Publican, (Mark 3. 18.; Luke 6. 15.); yet when this Matthew comes to speak of himself, he calls himself Matthew the Publican, (Matth. 10. 3.).

for

for I count this the self-same Matthew that Mark and Luke make mention of, because I find no other Matthew among the apostles but he: Matthew the Publican, Matthew the man so deep in apostacy, Matthew the man of that ill fame among his brethren. Love, in Mark and Luke, when they counted him among the apostles, did cover with silence this his Publican state; (and it is meet for Peter to call Paul his beloved brother, when Paul himself shall call himself the chief of sinners); but faithfulness to the world, and a desire to be abased, that Christ thereby and grace by him, might be advanced, made Matthew, in his evangelical writings, call himself by the name of Matthew the Publican. Nor has he lost thereby; for Christ again to exalt him, (as he hath also done by the apostle Paul), hath set by his special providence, the testimony that this Matthew hath given of his birth, life, death, doctrine, and miracles, in the front of all the New Testament.

(2.) The next Publican that I find by the Testament of Christ, made mention of by name, is Levi, another of the apostles of Jesus Christ. This Levi also, by the Holy Ghost in holy writ, is called by the name of James: Not James the brother of John, for Zebedee was his father; but James the son of Alpheus. Now I take this Levi also to be another than Matthew; first, because Matthew is not called the son of Alpheus; and because Matthew and Levi, or James the son of Alpheus, are distinctly counted where the names of the apostles are mentioned, Mat. 10. 3. for two distinct persons: And that this Levi, or James the apostle, was a Publican, as was the apostle Matthew, whom we mentioned before, is evident; for both Mark and Luke do count him such. First, Mark saith, Christ found him when he called him, as he also found Matthew, sitting at the receipt of custom; yea, Luke words it thus: *He went forth and saw a publican named Levi, sitting at the receipt of custom, and he said unto him follow me,* Mark 2. 14.; Luke 5. 27.

Now, that this Levi, or James the Son of Alpheus

was a Jew, his name doth well manifest. Besides, had there been among the apostles any more Gentiles save Simon the Canaanite, or if this Levi James had been here, I think the Holy Ghost would, to distinguish him, have included him in the same discriminating character as he did the other, when he called him *Simon the Canaanite*, Matth. 10. 4.

Matthew, therefore, and Levi or James were both Publicans, and as I think, called both at the same time: were both Publican-Jews, and made by grace the apostles of Jesus Christ.

(3.) The next Publican that I find by name made mention of in the Testament of Christ, is one *Zaccheus*, and he was a Publican; yea, for ought I know, the master of them all. *There was a man, saith Luke, named Zaccheus, which was the chief among the Publicans, and he was rich*, Luke 19. 2. This man, Christ saith, was a son of Abraham, that is, as other Jews were; for he spake to stop the mouths of their Pharisaical cavillations. Besides, the Publican shewed himself to be such an one, when under a supposition of wronging any man, he has respect to the Jewish law of restoring four-fold, *Exod. 22. 1.; 2 Sam. 12. 6.*

It is further manifest that he was a Jew, because Christ puts him among the lost; to wit, among the lost sheep of the house of Israel, ver. 10.; and Mat. 15. 24. for Zaccheus was one that might properly be said to be lost, and that in the Jews account: Lost, I say, and that not only in the most common sense, by reason of transgression against the law, but for that he was an apostate Jew, not with reference to Heathenish religion, but as to Heathenish, cruel, and barbarous actions; and therefore he was, as the other, by his brethren, counted as bad as Heathens, Gentiles, and harlots. But salvation is come to this house, saith Christ, and that notwithstanding his public practice, forasmuch as he also is the son of Abraham.

3. Again, Christ, by the parable of the lost sheep, doth plainly intimate, that the Publican was a Jew.

Then drew near all the Publicans and sinners for to hear him, and the Pharisees and Scribes murmured, saying, This man receiveth sinners, and eateth with them.

But with what answer doth Christ repel their objections? Why, he saith, *What man of you having an hundred sheep, if he lose one of them, doth not leave ninety and nine in the wilderness, and go after that which is lost until he find it?* Doth he not here, by the lost sheep, mean the poor Publican? plenty of whom, while he preached this sermon, were there, as objects of the Pharisees scorn, but of the pity and compassion of Jesus Christ; he did without doubt mean them. For, pray, what was the flock, and who Christ's sheep under the law, but the house and people of Israel? Ezek. 43. 30, 31. So then, Who could be the lost sheep of the house of Israel, but such as was Matthew, James, Zaccheus, and their companions in their and such-like transgressions.

4. Besides, had not the Publicans, been of the Jews, how easy had it been for the Pharisees to have objected, that an impertinency was couched in that most excellent parable of the lost sheep? They might have said, We are offended, because thou receivest the Publicans, and thou for vindication of thy practice propoundest a parable of lost sheep; but they are the sinners of the house of Israel, and the Publicans are aliens and Gentiles. I say, How easily might they thus have objected? but they knew full well, that the parable was pertinent, for that the Publicans were of the Jews, and not of the aliens. Yea, had they not been Jews, it cannot, it must not be thought that Christ (in sum) should call them so; and yet he did do so, when he called them *lost sheep*.

Now, that these Publicans were Jews, what follows but that for this they were a great deal the more abominated by their brethren; And (as I have also hinted before) it is no marvel that they were; for a treacherous brother is worse than an open enemy, Psal. 55. 12, 13.; For. if to be debauched in an open and common transgression is odious, how odious is it

for a brother to be so; for a brother in nature and religion to be so? I say again, all this they did, as both John insinuates, and Zaccheus confesses.

The Pharisee, therefore, was not so good, but the Publican was as bad. Indeed the Publican was a notorious wretch, one that had a way of transgressing by himself; one that could not be sufficiently condemned by the Jews, nor coupled with a viler than himself. It is true, you find him here in the temple at prayer; not because he had retained, in his apostacy, conscience of the true religion, but God had awakened him, shewed him his sin, and bestowed upon him the grace of repentance, by which he was not only fetched back to the temple, and prayer, but to his God, and to the salvation of his soul.

The Pharisee then was a man of another complexion, and good as to his own thoughts of himself, yea, and in the thoughts of others also, upon the highest and better ground by far. The Publican was a notorious sinner: the Pharisee was a reputed righteous man. The Publican was a sinner out of the ordinary way of sinning; and the Pharisee was a man for righteousness in a singular way also. The Publican pursued his villanies, and the Pharisee pursued his righteousness; and yet they both met in the temple to pray: Yea, the Pharisee stuck to, and boasted in the law of God: but the Publican did forsake it, and hardened his heart against his way.

Thus diverse were they in their appearances: the Pharisee very good, the Publican very bad: But as to the law of God, which looked upon them with reference to the state of their spirits, and the nature of their actions, by that they were both found sinners, the Publican an open outside one, and the Pharisee a filthy inside one. This is evident, because the best of them was rejected, and the worst of them was received to mercy. Mercy standeth not at the Publican's badness, nor is it enamoured with the Pharisee's goodness: It suffereth not the law to take place on both, though it findeth them both in sin, but graciously embraceth the most unworthy, and leaveth

the best to shift for himself. And good reason that both should be dealt with after this manner; to wit, that the word of grace should be justified upon the soul of the penitent, and that the other should stand or fall to that which he had chosen to be his master.

There are three things that follow upon this discourse.

1. That the righteousness of man is not of any esteem with God, as to justification. It is passed by as a thing of naughtiness, a thing not worth the taking notice of. There was not so much as notice taken of the Pharisee's person, or prayer, because he came into the temple mantled up in his own good things.

2. That the man that has nothing to commend him to God, but his own good doings, shall never be in favour with him. This also is evident from the text: The Pharisee had his own righteousness, but had nothing else to commend him to God; and therefore could not by that obtain favour with God, but abode still a rejected one, and in a state of condemnation.

3. Wherefore, though we are bound by the law of charity to judge of men according as in appearance they present themselves unto us; yet withal, to wit, though we do so judge, we must leave room for the judgement of God. Mercy may receive him that we have doomed to hell, and justice may take hold on him, whom we have judged to be bound up in the bundle of life. And both these things are apparent by the persons under consideration.

We, like Joseph, are for setting of Manasseh before Ephraim; but God, like Jacob, puts his hands across, and lays his right hand upon the worst man's head, and his left hand upon the best, Gen. 48. to the amazement and wonderment even of the best of men.

Two men went up into the temple to pray; the one a Pharisee; the other a Publican. The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, God, I thank thee that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adul-

terers

terers, or even as this Publican. *I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all that I possess.*

In these words many things are worth the noting. As,

First, The Pharisee's definition of righteousness; the which standeth in two things: 1. In negatives; 2. In positives.

1. In negatives; to wit, what a man that is righteous must not be: *I am no extortioner, no unjust man, no adulterer, nor yet as this Publican.*

2. In positives; to wit, what a man that is righteous must be: *I fast twice a week, I give tithes of all that I possess, &c.*

That righteousness standeth in negative and positive holiness is true; but that the Pharisee's definition is, notwithstanding, false, will be manifest by and by. But I will first treat of righteousness in the general, because the text leadeth me to it.

1. First then, A man that is righteous, must have negative holiness; that is, he must not live in actual transgressions; he must not be an extortioner, unjust, an adulterer, or as the Publican was. And this the apostle intends, when he saith, *Fly fornication, fly youthful lusts, fly from idolatry; and little children keep yourselves from idols*, 1 Cor. 6. 18. & 10. 14.; 2 Tim. 2. 22.; 1 John 5. 21. For it is a vain thing to talk of righteousness, and that ourselves are righteous, when every observer shall find us in actual transgression. Yea, though a man shall mix his want of negative holiness with some good actions, that will not make him a righteous man. As suppose, a man that is a swearer, a drunkard, an adulterer, or the like, should, notwithstanding this, be open-handed to the poor, be a great executer of justice in his place, be exact in his buying, selling, keeping his promise with his friend, or the like; these things, yea, many more such, cannot make him a righteous man; for the beginning of righteousness is yet wanting in him, which is this negative holiness: For except a man leave off to do evil, he cannot be a righteous man. Negative holiness is therefore of absolute necessity to
make

make one in one's self a righteous man. This therefore condemns them, that count it sufficient if a man have some actions that in themselves, and by virtue of the command are good, to make him a righteous man, though negative holiness is wanting. This is as saying to the wicked, Thou art righteous, and a perverting of the right way of the Lord: Negative holiness, therefore, must be in a man before he can be accounted righteous.

2. As negative holiness is required to declare one a righteous man; so also positive holiness must be joined therewith, or the man is unrighteous still. For it is not what a man is not, but what a man does, that declares him a righteous man. Suppose a man be no thief, no liar, no unjust man; or, as the Pharisee saith, no extortioner, nor adulterer, &c. this will not make a righteous man; but there must be joined to these, holy and good actions, before he can be declared a righteous man. Wherefore, as the apostle, when he pressed the Christians to righteousness, did put them first upon negative holiness, so he joineth thereto an exhortation to positive holiness; knowing, that where positive holiness is wanting, all the negative holiness in the whole world cannot declare a man a righteous man. When therefore he had said, *But thou, O man of God, flee these things*, (sins and wickedness), he adds, *and follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness, &c.* 1 Tim. 6. 11.) Here Timothy is exhorted to negative holiness, when he is bid to flee sin. Here also he is exhorted to positive holiness, when he is bid to follow after righteousness, &c.; for righteousness can neither stand in negative nor positive holiness, as severed one from another. That man then, and that man only, is, as to actions, a righteous man that hath left off to do evil, and hath learned to do well, Isa. 1. 16, 17. that hath cast off the works of darkness, and put on the armour of light. *Flee youthful lusts*, (said Paul), *and follow after righteousness, faith, charity, peace, with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart*, 2 Tim. 2. 22.

The Pharisee, therefore, as to the general description of righteousness, made his definition right; but as to his person and personal righteousness, he made his definition wrong. I do not mean he defined his own righteousness wrong, but I mean his definition of true righteousness, which standeth in negative and positive holiness, he made to stoop to justify his own righteousness, and therein he played the hypocrite in his prayer: For although it is true righteousness that standeth in negative and positive holiness; yet that is not true righteousness that standeth, but in some pieces and ragged remnants of negative and positive righteousness. If then the Pharisee would, in his definition of personal righteousness, have proved his own righteousness to be good, he must have proved, that both his negative and positive holiness had been universal; to wit, that he had left off to act in any wickedness, and that he had given up himself to the duty enjoined in every commandment: For so the righteous man is described, Job 1. 8. and 2. 3. As it is said of Zacharias and Elisabeth his wife, *They were both righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless*, Luke 1. 5, 6. Here the perfection, that is, the universality of their negative holiness, is implied, and the universality of their positive holiness is expressed: They walked in all the commandments of the Lord; but that they could not do, if they had lived in any unrighteous thing or way. They walked in all blamelessly, that is, sincerely, with upright hearts. The Pharisee's righteousness therefore, even by his own implied definition of righteousness, was not good, as is manifest these two ways.

1. His negative holiness was not universal.

2. His positive holiness was rather ceremonial than moral.

1. His negative holiness was not universal. He saith indeed, he was not an extortioner, nor unjust, no adulterer, nor yet as this Publican: but none of these expressions apart, nor all, if put together, do prove him to be perfect as to negative holiness; that is, they do

do not prove him, should it be granted, that he was as holy with this kind of holiness, as himself of himself had testified. For,

(1.) What! though he was no extortioner, he might yet be a covetous man, Luke 16. 14.

(2.) What though, as to dealing, he was not unjust to others, yet he wanted honesty to do justice to his own soul, Luke 16. 15.

(3.) What though he was free from the act of adultery, he might yet be made guilty by an adulterous eye, against which the Pharisee did not watch, (Matth. 2. 28.), of which the Pharisee did not take cognisance.

(4.) What though he was not like the Publican, yet he was like, yea, was a downright hypocrite; he wanted in those things wherein he boasted himself, sincerity; but without sincerity no action can be good, or accounted of God as righteous. The Pharisee, therefore, notwithstanding his boast, was deficient in his righteousness, though he would fain have shrouded it under the right definition thereof.

(5.) Nor doth his positive holiness help him at all, forasmuch as it is grounded mostly, if not altogether, in ceremonial holiness: nay, I will recollect myself, it was grounded partly in ceremonial and partly in superstitious holiness, if there be such a thing as superstitious holiness in the world, this paying of tithes was ceremonial, such as came in and went out with the typical priesthood. But what is that to positive holiness, when it was but a small pittance by the by. Had the Pharisee argued plainly and honestly, I mean, had he so dealt with that law, by which now he sought to be justified, he should have brought forth positive righteousness in morals, and should have said and proved it too, that as he was no wicked man with reference to the act of wickedness, he was indeed a righteous man in acts of moral virtues. He should, I say, have proved himself a true lover of God, no superstitious one, but a sincere worshipper of him; for this is contained in the first table, (Exod. 20.), and is so in sum expounded by the Lord Christ himself,

himself, (Mark 12. 30.) He should also in the next place have proved himself truly kind, compassionate, liberal, and full of love and charity to his neighbour; for that is the sum of the second table, as our Lord doth expound it, saying, *Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself*, Mark 12. 31.

True, he says, he did them no hurt; but did he do them good? To do no hurt, is one thing; and to do good, is another; and it is possible for a man to do neither hurt nor good to his neighbour. What then, is he a righteous man because he hath done him no hurt? No verily; unless, to his power, he hath also done him good.

It is therefore a very fallacious and deceitful arguing of the Pharisee, thus to speak before God in his prayers: I am righteous, because I have not hurt my neighbour, and because I have acted in ceremonial duties. Nor will that help him at all to say, he gave tithes of all that he possessed. It had been more modest to say, that he had paid them; for they, being commanded, were a due debt; nor could they go before God for a free gift, because, by the commandment, they were made a payment; but proud men and hypocrites love so to word it both with God and man, as at least to imply, that they are more forward to do, than God's command is to require them to do.

The second part of his positive holiness was superstitious; for God hath appointed no such set fasts, neither more nor less, but just twice a week: I fast twice a week. Ay, but who did command thee to do so, other than by thy being put upon it by a superstitious and erroneous conscience, doth not, nor canst thou make to appear. This part therefore of this positive righteousness, was positive superstition, and abuse of God's law, and a gratification of thy own erroneous conscience. Hitherto, therefore, thou art defective in thy so seemingly brave and glorious righteousness.

Yet this let me say, in commendation of the Pharisee, In my conscience he was better than many of our English Christians; for many of them are so far off from

being at all partakers of positive righteousness, that all their ministers, Bibles, and good books, good sermons, nor yet God's judgments, can persuade them to become so much as negatively holy, that is, to leave off evil.

The second thing that I take notice of in this prayer of the Pharisee, is his manner of delivery, as he stood praying in the temple: *God, I thank thee*, said he, *that I am not as other men are.* He seemed to be at this time in more than an ordinary frame, while now he stood in the presence of the divine Majesty: For a prayer made up of praise, is a prayer made up of the highest order, and is most like the way of them that are now in a state beyond prayer. Praise is the work of heaven; but we see here, that an hypocrite may get into that vein, even while an hypocrite, and while on earth below. Nor do I think that this prayer of his was a premeditated stilted form, but a prayer *extempore*, made on a sudden, according to what he felt, thought, or understood of himself.

Here therefore we may see, that even prayer, as well as other acts of religious worship, may be performed in great hypocrisy; although I think, that to perform prayer in hypocrisy, is one of the most daring sins that are committed by the sons of men. For by prayer, above all other duties, is our most direct and immediate personal approach into the presence of God; and as there is an uttering of things before him, especially a giving of him thanks for things received, or a begging, that such and such things might be bestowed upon me. But now, to do these things in hypocrisy, (and it is easy to do them-so, when we go up into the temple to pray), must needs be intolerable wickedness, and it argueth infinite patience in God, that he should let such as do so, arise alive from their knees, or that he should suffer them to go away from the place where they stand without some token or mark of his wrath upon them.

I also observe, that this *extempore* prayer of the Pharisee was formed by himself, or in the strength of his own natural parts; for so the text implieth: *The Pharisee*, saith the text, *stood and prayed thus with himself*, or by himself, and may signify, either that he spoke

spoke softly, or that he made this prayer by reason of his natural parts. *I will pray with the Spirit*, saith Paul, 1 Cor. 14. 15. *The Pharisee prayed with himself*, said Christ. It is at this day wonderful common for men to pray *extempore* also: to pray by a book, by a premeditated set form, is now out of fashion. He is counted no body now, that cannot at any time, at a minute's warning, make a prayer of half an hour long. I am not against *extempore* prayer, for I believe it to be the best kind of praying; but yet I am jealous, that there are a great many such prayers made, especially in pulpits and public meetings, without the breathing of the Holy Ghost in them; for if a Pharisee of old could do so, why not a Pharisee do the same now? wit and reason, and notion, is not screwed up to a very great height; nor do men want words, or fancies, or pride, to make them do this thing. Great is the formality of religion this day, and little the power thereof. Now, where there is a great form, and little power, (and such there was among the Jews, in the time of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ), there men are most strangely under the temptation to be hypocrites; for nothing doth so properly and directly oppose hypocrisy, as the power and glory of the things we profess. And so, on the contrary, nothing is a greater temptation to hypocrisy, than a form of knowledge of things without the savour thereof. Nor can much of the power and savour of the things of the gospel be seen at this day upon professors, (I speak not now of all), if their notions and conversations be compared together. How proud, how covetous, how like the world in garb and guise, in words and actions, are most of the great professors of this our day! But when they come to divine worship, especially to pray, by their words and carriage there, one would almost judge them to be angels in heaven. But such things must be done in hypocrisy, as also the Pharisee's was.

The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself.

And in that it is said he prayed with himself, it may signify, that he went in his prayer no further

than his sense and reason, feeling and carnal apprehensions, went. True, Christian prayer oft-times leaves sense and reason, feeling and carnal apprehensions behind it; and it goeth forth with faith, hope, and desires, to know what at present we are ignorant of, and that unto which our sense, feeling, reason, &c. are strangers. The apostle indeed doth say, *I will pray with the understanding*, 1 Cor. 14. 15.; but then it must be taken for an understanding spiritually enlightened. I say, it must be so understood, because the natural understanding, as such, receiveth not the things of God; therefore cannot pray for them; for they to such are foolish things, 1 Cor. 2. 24.

Now, a spiritually enlightened understanding may be officious in prayer these ways.

1. As it has received conviction of the truth of the being of the Spirit of God; for to receive conviction of the truth and being of such things, comes from the Spirit of God, not from the law, sense, or reason, 1 Cor. 2. 10, 11, 12. Now, the understanding having, by the Holy Ghost, received conviction of the truth of things, draweth out the heart to cry in prayer to God for them. Therefore he saith, he would pray with the understanding.

2. Spiritually enlightened understanding hath also received, by the Holy Ghost, conviction of the excellency and glory of the things that are of the Spirit of God, and so inflameth the heart with more fervent desires in this duty of prayer; for there is a supernatural excellency in the things that are of the Spirit: *For if the ministration of death, (to which the Pharisee adhered), written and engraven in stones, was glorious, so that the children of Israel could not stedfastly behold the face of Moses, for the glory of his countenance, which glory was to be done away. How shall not the ministration of the Spirit be rather glorious? For if the ministration of condemnation be glory, much more doth the ministration of righteousness exceed in glory: For even that which was made glorious had no glory in this respect, by reason of the glory that excelleth*, 2 Cor. 3. 7, 8, 9, 10. And the Spirit of
God

God sheweth, at least, some things of that excellent glory of them to the understanding that it enlighteneth, Eph. 1. 17, 18, 19.

3. The spiritually enlightened understanding hath also thereby received knowledge, that these excellent supernatural things of the Spirit, are given by covenant in Christ to those that love God, and are beloved of him. *Now we have received*, says Paul, *not the Spirit of the world*, (that the Pharisee had) *but the Spirit which is of God, that we may know the things that are freely given to us of God*, 1 Cor. 2. 12. And this knowledge, that the things of the Spirit of God are freely given to us of God, puts, yet a great edge, more vigour, and yet further confidence into the heart to ask for what is mine by gift, by a free gift of God in his Son. But all these things the poor Pharisee was an utter stranger to; he knew not the Spirit, nor the things of the Spirit, and therefore must neglect faith, judgement, and the love of God, Mat. 23. 23.; Luke 11. 42. and follow himself only, as to his sense, feeling, reason, and carnal imagination in prayer.

He stood and prayed thus, (with himself). He prayed thus, talking to himself; for so also it may (I think) be understood. It is said of the unjust judge, he said *within himself, though I fear not God, nor regard man*, &c. Luke 18. 4.; that is, he said it to himself. So the Pharisee is said to pray with himself: God and the Pharisee were not together, there was only the Pharisee and himself. Paul knew not what to pray for without the Holy Ghost joined himself with him, and helped him with groans unutterable; but the Pharisee had no need of that; it was enough that he and himself were together at this work; for he thought without doubting that he and himself together could do. How many times have I heard ancient men, and ancient women, at it, with themselves, when all alone in some private room, or in some solitary path; and in their chat they have been sometimes reasoning, sometimes chiding, sometimes pleading, sometimes praying, and sometimes singing; but

but yet all has been done by themselves when all alone; but yet so done, as one that has not seen them must needs have concluded, that they were talking, singing, and praying, with company, when all that they had said, they did it with themselves, and had neither auditor nor regarder.

So the Pharisee was at it with himself, he and himself performed, at this time, the duty of prayer. Now I observe, that usually when men do speak to or with themselves, they greatly strive to please themselves: Therefore it is said, there is a man *that flattereth himself in his own eyes, until his iniquity be found to be hateful*, Psal. 36. 2. He flattereth himself in his own way, according as his sense and carnal reason dictates to him; and he might do it as well in prayer as in any other way. Some men will so hear sermons, and apply them that they may please themselves; And some men will pray, but will refuse such words and thoughts in prayer as will not please themselves.

Oh! how many men speak all that they speak in prayer, rather to themselves, or to their auditory, than to God that dwelleth in heaven! And this I take to be the manner, I mean something of the manner of the Pharisee's praying. Indeed, he made mention of God, as also others do; but he prayed with himself to himself, in his own spirit, and to his own pleasing, as the matter of his prayer doth manifest. For was it not pleasant to this hypocrite, think you, to speak thus well of himself at this time? Doubtless it was. Also children and fools are of the same temper with hypocrites, as to this: They also love, without ground, as the Pharisee, to flatter themselves in their own eyes; but not he that commendeth himself is approved.

God, I thank thee, I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this Publican, &c.

Thus he begins his prayer; and it is, as was hinted before, a prayer of the highest strain. For to make a prayer all of thanksgiving, and to urge in that prayer

prayer the cause of that thanksgiving, is the highest manner of praying, and seems to be done in the strongest faith, &c. in the greatest sense of things. And such was the Pharisee's prayer, only he wanted substantial ground for his thanksgiving, to wit, he wanted proof of that he said, *He was not as other men were*, except he had meant, as he did not, that he was even of the worst sort of men: For even the best of men by nature, and the worst, are all alike. *What, are we better than they?* saith Paul, *No, in no wise*, Rom. 3. 9. So then he failed in the ground of his thankfulness, and therefore his thankfulness was grounded on untruth, and so became feigned, self-flattering, and could not be acceptable with the God of heaven.

Besides, in this high prayer of the Pharisee, he fathered that upon God which he could by no means own, to wit, that he being so good as he thought himself to be, was through distinguishing love and favour of God: *God I thank thee, I am not as other men are*; I thank thee, that thou hast made me better than others; I thank thee that my condition is so good, and that I am so far advanced above my neighbour.

There are several things flow from this prayer of the Pharisee that are worth our observation: As,

1. That the Pharisee and hypocrites do not love to count themselves sinners, when they stand before God. They chuse rather to commend themselves before him for virtuous and holy persons, sometimes saying, and oftener thinking that they are more righteous than others. Yea, it seems by the word to be natural, hereditary, and so common for hypocrites to trust to themselves that they are righteous, and then to condemn others: This is the foundation upon which this very parable is built: *He spake this parable*, saith Luke, *unto certain that trusted in themselves as being righteous, or, that they were so, and despised others*, ver. 9.

I say, hypocrites love not to think of their sins, when they stand in the presence of God; but rather

to

to muster up, and to present him with their several good deeds, and to venture a standing or falling by them.

2. This carriage of the Pharisee before God informs us, that moral virtues, and the ground of them, which is the law, if trusted to, blinds the mind of man that he cannot for them perceive the way to happiness. While Moses is read, (and his law and the righteousness thereof trusted to), the vail is upon their heart, *And even unto this day*, said Paul, *the same vail remaineth untaken away* in the reading of the Old Testament, which vail is done away in Christ.* But even unto this day, when Moses is read, the vail is over their heart, 2 Cor. 3. 14, 15. And this is the reason so many moral men, that are adorned with civil and moral righteousness, are yet so ignorant of themselves, and the way of life by Christ.

The law of works, and the righteousness of the flesh, which is the righteousness of the law, blinds their minds, shuts up their eyes, and causeth them to miss of the righteousness that they are so hotly in the pursuit of. Their minds were blinded, saith the text: Whose minds? Why those that adhered to that stood by, and that sought righteousness of the law. Now,

The Pharisee was such an one; he rested in the law, he made his boasts of God, and trusted to himself that he was righteous; all this proceeded of that blindness and ignorance that the law had possessed his mind withal; for it is not granted to the law to be the ministration of life and light, but to be the ministration of death, when it speaks; and of darkness, when trusted unto, that the Son of God might have the pre-eminence in all things: Therefore it is said when the heart shall turn to him, the vail shall be taken away, 2 Cor. 3. 16.

3. We may see by this prayer, the strength of vain confidence; it will embolden a man to stand in his own lie before God; it will embolden a man to trust in himself, and to what he hath done; yea, to plead his own goodness, instead of God's mercy, before him.

For the Pharisee was not only a man that justified himself before men, but that justified himself before God: and what was the cause of his so justifying of himself before God; but that vain confidence that he had in himself and his works, which were both a cheat and a lie to himself? But I say, the boldness of the man was wonderful, for he stood to the lie that was in his right hand, and pleaded the goodness of it before him.

But besides these things, there are four things more that are couched in this prayer of the Pharisee.

1. By this prayer the Pharisee doth appropriate to himself conversion; he challengeth it to himself and to his fellows. *I am not*, saith he, *as other men*; that is, in unconversion, in a state of sin, wrath, and death: and this must be his meaning; for the religion of the Pharisee was not grounded upon any particular natural privilege: I mean not singly, not only upon that, but upon a falling in with those principles, notions, opinions, decrees, traditions, and doctrines that they taught distinct from the true and holy doctrines of the prophets. And they made to themselves disciples by such doctrine, men that they could captivate by those principles, laws, doctrines, and traditions: and therefore such are said to be of the sect of the Pharisees; that is, the scholars and disciples of them, converted to them and to their doctrine. Oh! it is easy for souls to appropriate conversion to themselves, that know not what conversion is. It is easy, I say, for men to lay conversion to God, on a legal, or ceremonial, or delusive bottom, on such a bottom that will sink under the burden that is laid upon it; on such a bottom that will not stand when it is brought under the touchstone of God, nor against the rain, wind, and floods that are ordained to put it to the trial, whether it is true or false. The Pharisee here stands upon a supposed conversion to God; *I am not as other men*; but both he and his conversion are rejected by the sequel of the parable: *That which is highly esteemed among men, (Luke 16. 15.), is abomination in the sight of God.* That is, that conversion,

version, that men, as men, flatter themselves that they have, is such. But the Pharisee will be a converted man, he will have no more to shew for heaven than his neighbour, *I am not as other men are*; to wit, in a state of sin and condemnation, but in a state of conversion and salvation. But see how grievously this sect, this religion, beguiled men. It made them twofold worse the children of hell than they were before: and than their teachers were, Matth. 23. 15.; that is, their doctrine begat such blindness, such vain confidence, and groundless boldness in their disciples, as to involve them in that conceit of conversion that was false, and so if trusted to, damnable.

2. By these words, we find the Pharisee, not only appropriating conversion to himself, but rejoicing in that conversion: *God, I thank thee*, saith he, *that I am not as other men*; which saying of his gives us to see that he glorified in his conversion; he made no doubt at all of his state, but lived in the joy of the safety that he supposed his soul, by his conversion, to be in. Oh! thanks to God, says he, I am not in the state of sin, death, and damnation, as the unjust, and this Publican is. But a strange delusion! to trust to the spider's web, and to think, that a few, or the most fine of the works of the flesh, would be sufficient to bear up the soul in, at, and under the judgment of God. *There is a generation that are pure in their own eyes, and yet are not washed from their filthiness..* This text can be so fitly applied to none as the Pharisee, and to those that tread in the Pharisee's steps, and that are swallowed up with his own conceits, and with the glory of his own righteousness.

So again, *There is a way (a way to heaven) which seemeth right to a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death*, Prov. 30. 12; chap. 14. 12. This also is fulfilled in these kind of men; at the end of their way is death and hell, notwithstanding their confidence in the goodness of their state.

Again, *There is that maketh himself rich, yet hath nothing*, Prov. 13. 7. What can be more plain from all those texts, than that some men that are out of the way think themselves in it; and that some men

think

think themselves clean, that are yet in their filthiness, and that think themselves rich for the next world, and yet are poor, and miserable, and wretched, and blind, and naked. Thus the poor, blind, naked, hypocritical Pharisee thought of himself, when God threatened to abase him : Yea, he thought himself thus, and joyed therein, when indeed he was going down to the chambers of death.

3. By these words, the Pharisee seems to put the goodness of his condition upon the goodness of God. *I am not as other men are*, and I thank God for it. God, saith he, *I thank thee, that I am not as other men are*. He thanked God, when God had done nothing for him. He thanked God, when the way that he was in was not of God's prescribing, but of his own inventing. So the persecutor thanks God that he was put into that way of roguery that the devil had put him into, when he fell to rending and tearing of the church of God ; *Their possessors slay them, saith the prophet, and hold themselves not guilty : and they that sell them, say, Blessed be the Lord, for I am rich*, Zech. 11. 5. I remember that Luther used to say, In the name of God begins all mischief. All must be fathered upon God ; the Pharisee's conversion must be fathered upon God ; the right, or rather the villainy of the outrageous persecution against God's people, must be fathered upon God. *God, I thank thee*, and, blessed be God, must be the burden of the heretic's song. So again, the free-willer, he will ascribe all to God ; the Quaker, the ranter, the Socinian, &c. will ascribe all to God. *God, I thank thee*, is in every man's mouth, and must be intailed to every error, delusion, and damnable doctrine that is in the world : But the name of God, and their doctrine, worship, and way, hangeth together, and the Pharisee's doctrine ; that is to say, nothing at all : for God hath not proposed their principles, nor doth he own them, nor hath he commanded them, nor doth he convey by them the least grace or mercy to them ; but rather rejecteth them, and holdeth them for his enemies, and for the destroyers of the world.

4. We come, in the next place, to the ground of all this, and that is, to what the Pharisee had attained; to wit, that he was no extortioner, no unjust man, no adulterer, nor even as this Publican, and for that he fasted twice a-week, and paid tithes of all that he possessed. So that you see he pretended to a double foundation for his salvation, a moral and a ceremonial one: but both very lean, weak, and feeble: For the first of his foundations, what is it more, if all be true that he saith, but a being removed a few inches from the vilest men in their vilest actions, a very slender matter to build my confidence for heaven upon?

And for the second part of his ground for life, what is it but a couple of ceremonies, if so good? the first is questioned as a thing not founded in God's law; and the second is such, as is of the remotest sort of ceremonies, that teach and preach the Lord Jesus. But suppose them to be the best, and his conformity to them the thoroughest, they never were ordained to get to heaven by, and so are become but a sandy foundation. But any thing will serve some men for a foundation and support for their souls, and to build their hopes of heaven upon. I am not a drunkard, says one, nor a liar, nor a swearer, nor a thief, and therefore I thank God, I have hopes of heaven and glory. I am not an extortioner, nor an adulterer, nor unjust, nor yet as this Publican; and therefore do hope I shall go to heaven. Alas! poor men! will your being furnished with these things save you from the thundering claps and vehement batteries that the wrath of God will make upon sin and sinners in the day that shall burn like an oven? No, no; nothing at that day can shroud a man from the hot rebukes of that vengeance, but the very righteousness of God, which is not the righteousness of the law, however christened, named, or garnished with all the righteousness of man.

But, O thou blind Pharisee, since thou art so confident that thy state is good, and thy righteousness is that that will stand, when it shall be tried with fire, (1 Cor. 3. 13.), let me now reason with thee of righteousness.

teousness. My terror shall not make thee afraid; I am not God, but a man as thou art; we both are formed out of the clay.

First, Prithee when didst thou begin to be righteous? Was it before or after thou hadst been a sinner? Not afore, I dare say; but if after, then the sins that thou pollutedst thyself withal before, have made thee incapable of acting legal righteousness: For sin, where it is, pollutes, defiles, and makes vile the whole man; therefore thou canst not by after acts of obedience make thyself just in the sight of that God thou pretended now to stand praying unto. Indeed thou mayst cover thy dirt, and paint thy sepulchre; for that acts of after obedience will do, though sin has gone before. But, Pharisee, God can see through the white of this wall, even to the dirt that is within: God can also see through the paint and garnish of thy beauteous sepulchre, to the dead mens bones that are within; nor can any of thy most holy duties, nor all, when put together, blind the eye of the all-seeing Majesty from beholding all the uncleanness of thy soul, (Matth. 23. 27.). Stand not therefore so stoutly to it, now thou art before God; sin is with thee, and judgement and justice is before him. It becomes thee, therefore, rather to despise and abhor this life, and to count all thy doings but dross and dung, and to be content to be justified with another's righteousness instead of thy own. This is the way to be secured. I say, blind Pharisee, this is the way to be secured from the wrath which is to come.

There is nothing more certain than this, that as to justification from the curse of the law, God has rejected man's righteousness, for the weakness and unprofitableness thereof; and hath accepted in the room of that the glorious righteousness of his Son; because indeed that, and that only, is universal, perfect, and equal with his justice and holiness. This is in a manner the contents of the whole Bible, and therefore must needs be most certainly true. Now then, Mr Pharisee, methinks, what if thou didst this, and that while thou art at thy prayers, to wit, cast in thy mind

mind what doth God love most? and the resolve will be at hand. The best righteousness, surely the best righteousness; for that thy reason will tell thee: This done, even while thou art at thy devotion, ask thyself again, But who has the best righteousness? and that resolve will be at hand also; to wit, he that in person is equal with God, and that is his Son Jesus Christ; he that is separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens, and that is his Son Jesus Christ; he that did no sin, nor had any guilt found in his mouth; and there never was any such he in all the world but the Son of God, Jesus Christ.

Now, Pharisee, when thou hast done this, then, as thou art at thy devotion, ask again, But what is this best righteousness, the righteousness of Christ, to do? and the answer will be ready. It is to be made by an act of the sovereign grace of God over to the sinner, that shall dare to trust thereto for justification from the curse of the law. *He is made unto us of God, righteousness. He hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him. For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth,* 1 Cor. 1. 30.; 2 Cor. 5. 21.; Rom. 10. 4.

This done, and concluded on, then turn again, Pharisee, and say thus with thyself; Is it most safe for me to trust in this righteousness of God, this righteousness of God-man, this righteousness of Christ? Certainly it is; since, by the text, it is counted the best, and that which is best pleaseth God; since it is that which God hath appointed, that sinners shall be justified withal. *For in the Lord have we righteousness if we believe: And, in the Lord we are justified and do glory,* Isa. 45. 24, 25.

Nay, Pharisee, suppose thine own righteousness should be as long, as broad, as high, as deep, as perfect, as good, even every way as good, as the righteousness of Christ; yet since God has chose, by Christ to reconcile us to himself, canst thou attempt to seek by thy own righteousness to reconcile thyself to God, and not attempt (at least) to confront this righteous

ness of Christ before God; yea, to challenge it by acceptance of thy person contrary to God's design?

Suppose, that when the king has chosen one to be judge in the land, and has determined that he shall be judge in all cases, and that by his verdict every man's judgement shall stand; I say, suppose, after this, another should arise, and of his own head resolve to do his own business himself: Now, though he should be every whit as able, yea, and suppose he should do it as justly and righteously too, yet his making of himself a judge, would be an affront to the king, and an act of rebellion, and so a transgression worthy of punishment.

Why, Pharisee, God hath appointed, that by the righteousness of his Son, and by that righteousness only, men shall be justified in his sight from the curse of the law. Wherefore, take heed, and at thy peril, whatever thy righteousness is, confront not the righteousness of Christ therewith. I say, bring it not in, let it not plead for thee at the bar of God, nor do thou plead for that in his court of justice; for thou canst not do this and be innocent. If he trusts to his righteousness, he hath sinned, says Ezekiel. Mark the text, *When I shall say to the righteous, he shall surely live; if he trusts to his own righteousness, and commits iniquity, all his righteousness shall not be remembered: but for the iniquity that he hath committed, he shall die for it, Ezek. 33. 13.*

Observe a few things from this text; and they are these that follow.

1. Here is a righteous man; a man with whom, we do not hear, that the God of heaven finds fault.

2. Here is a promise made to this man, that he shall surely live; but on this condition, that he trusts not to his own righteousness. Whence it is manifest, that the promise of life to this righteous man, is not for the sake of his righteousness, but for the sake of something else, to wit, the righteousness of Christ.

1. Not for the sake of his own righteousness. This is evident, because we are admitted, yea, commanded, to trust in the righteousness that saveth us. The

righteousness

righteousness of God is unto us all, and upon all that believe; that is, trust in it, and trust to it for justification. Now therefore, if thy righteousness, when most perfect, could save thee, thou mightest, yea oughtest, most boldly to trust therein. But since thou art forbidden to trust to it, it is evident it cannot save; nor is it for the sake of that, that the righteous man is saved, Rom. 3. 21, 22.

2. But for the sake of something else, to wit, for the sake of the righteousness of Christ, whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God. To declare (I say) at this time his righteousness, that he might be just, and the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus, Rom. 3. 24, 25. See Phil. 3. 6, 7, 8.

If he trusts to his own righteousness, and commit iniquity, all his righteousness shall not be remembered; but for his iniquity that he hath committed, (in trusting to his own righteousness), he shall die for it.

Note hence further.

1. That there is more virtue in one sin to destroy, than in all thy righteousness to save thee alive. If he trust, if he trust never so little, if he do at all trust to his own righteousness, all his righteousness shall be forgotten; and by, and for, and in, the sin that he hath committed, in trusting to it, he shall die.

2. Take notice also, that there are more damnable sins than those that are against the moral law. By which of the ten commandments is trusting to our own righteousness forbidden? Yet it is a sin: it is a sin therefore forbidden by the gospel, and is included, lurketh close in, yea, is the or a root of unbelief itself; *He that believes not shall be damned.* But he that trusteth in his own righteousness doth not believe, neither in the truth, or sufficiency of the righteousness of Christ to save him, therefore he shall be damned.

But how is it manifest, that he that trusteth to his own righteousness, doth it through a doubt, or unbelief

belief of the truth or sufficiency of the righteousness of Christ?

I answer, Because he trusteth to his own. A man will never willingly chuse to trust to the worst of helps, when he believes there is a better as near, and to be had as soon, and that too, upon as easy if not more easy terms. If he that trusteth to his own righteousness for life, did believe, that there is indeed such a thing as the righteousness of Christ to justify, and that this righteousness of Christ has in it all sufficiency to do that blessed work, be sure he would chuse that, thereon to lay, lean, and venture his soul, that he saw was the best, and most sufficient to save; especially when he saw also, (and see that he must, when he sees the righteousness of Christ), to wit, that that is to be obtained as soon, because as near, and to be had on as easy terms: nay, upon easier than man's own righteousness. I say, he would sooner chuse it, because of the weight of salvation, of the worth of salvation, and of the fearful sorrow that to eternity will overtake him that in this thing shall miscarry. It is for heaven, it is to escape hell, wrath, and damnation, saith the soul; and therefore I will, I must, I dare not but chuse that, and that only, that I believe to be the best and most sufficient help in so great a concern, as soul-concern is. So then he that trusteth to his own righteousness, does it of unbelief of the sufficiency of the righteousness of Christ to save him.

Wherefore this sin of trusting to his own righteousness, is a most high transgression; because it contemneth the righteousness of Christ, which is the only righteousness that is sufficient to save from the curse of the law. It also disalloweth the design of heaven, and the excellency of the mystery of the wisdom of God, in designing this way of salvation for man. What shall I say, It also seeketh to rob God of the honour of the salvation of man. It seeketh to take the crown from the head of Christ, and to set it up on the hypocrite's head; therefore, no marvel that this one sin be of that weight, virtue, and power, as

to sink that man and his righteousness into hell, that leaneth thereon, or trusteth unto it.

But, Pharisee, I need not talk thus unto thee; for thou art not the man that hath that righteousness that God findeth not fault withal: nor is it to be found, but with him that is ordained to be the Saviour of mankind; nor is there any such ones besides Jesus, who is called Christ. What madness then has brought thee into the temple, there in an audacious manner to stand and vaunt before God saying, *God, I thank thee, I am not as other men are?*

Dost thou not know, that he that breaks one, breaks all the commandments of God: and consequently, that he that keeps not all, keeps none at all of the commandments of God? Saith not the scripture the same? *For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, is guilty of all,* Jam. 2. 10. Be confounded then, be confounded.

Dost thou know the God with whom now thou hast to do? He is a God that cannot (as he is just) accept of an half righteousness for an whole: of a lame righteousness for a sound; of a sick righteousness for a well and healthy one, Mal. 1. 7, 8. And if so, how should he then accept of that which is no righteousness? I say, how should he accept of that which is none at all, (for thine is only such)? And if Christ said, when you have done all, say, *We are unprofitable*, How camest thou to say, before thou hadst done one thing well, I am better, more righteous than other men?

Didst thou believe, when thou saidst it, that God knew thy heart? Hadst thou said this to the Publican, it had been a high and rampant expression; but to say this before God, to the face of God, when he knew that thou wast vile, and a sinner from the womb, and from the conception, spoils all. It was spoken to put a check to thy arrogance, when Christ said, *Ye are they, that justify yourselves before men, but God knows your hearts,* Luke 16. 15.

Hast thou taken notice of this, that God judgeth the fruit by the heart from whence it comes? *A good man,*

man, out of the good treasure of his heart, bringeth forth that which is good; and an evil man, out of the evil treasure of his heart, bringeth forth that which is evil, Luke 6. 45. Nor can it be otherwise concluded, but that thou art an evil man, and so that all thy supposed good is nought but badness. For that thou hast made it to stand in the room of Jesus, and hast dared to commend thyself to the living God thereby: for thou hast trusted in thy shadow of righteousness, and committed iniquity. Thy sin hath melted away thy righteousness, and turned it to nothing but dross; or, if you will, to the early dew, like to which it goeth away, and so can by no means do thee good, when thou shalt stand in need of salvation and eternal life of God.

But, further, thou sayst thou art righteous; but they are but vain words. Knowest thou not that thy zeal, which is the life of thy righteousness, is preposterous in many things. What else means thy madness, and the rage thereof, against men as good as thyself. True, thy being ignorant that they are good, may save thee from the commission of the sin that is unpardonable; but it will never keep thee from spot in God's sight, but will make both thee and thy righteousness culpable.

Paul, who was once as brave a Pharisee as thou canst be, calleth much of that zeal, which he in that estate was possessed with, and lived in the exercise of, madness; yea, exceeding madness, Acts 20. 9, 10, 11.; Phil. 3. 5, 6. and of the same sort is much of thine, and it must be so; for a lawyer, a man for the law, and that resteth in it, must be a persecutor; yea, a persecutor of righteous men, and that of zeal to God; because by the law is begotten, through the weakness that it meeteth with in thee, sourness, bitterness of spirit, and anger against him, that rightfully condemneth thee of folly, for chusing to trust to thy own righteousness, when a better is provided of God to save us, Gal. 4. 28, 29, 30, 31. Thy righteousness therefore is deficient; yea, thy zeal for the law, and the men of the law, has joined

The Pharisee and the Publican.

madness with thy moral virtues, and made thy righteousness unrighteousness; how then canst thou be upright before the Lord?

Further, Has not the pride of thy spirit in this hot-headed zeal for thy Pharisaical notions run thee up on thinking, that thou art able to do more than God hath enjoined thee, and so able to make thyself more righteous than God requireth thou shouldst be? What else is the cause of thy adding laws to God's laws, precepts to God's precepts, and traditions to God's appointment? Mark 7. Nay, hast thou not, by thus doing, condemned the law of want of perfection, and so the God that gave it, of want of wisdom and faithfulness to himself and thee?

Nay, I say again, hath not thy thus doing charged God with being ignorant of knowing what rules there needed to be imposed on his creatures to make their obedience complete? And doth not this madness of thine intimate, moreover, that if thou hadst not stepped in with the bundle of thy traditions, righteousness had been imperfect, not through man's weakness, but through impediment in God, or in his ministering rules of righteousness unto us?

Now, when thou hast thought on these things, fairly answer thyself these few questions. Is not this arrogancy? Is not this blasphemy? Is not this to condemn God, that thou mightest be righteous? And dost thou think, this is indeed the way to be righteous?

But again, what means thy preferring of thine own rules, laws, statutes, ordinances, and appointments, before the rules, laws, statutes, and appointments of God? Thinkest thou this to be right? Whither will thy zeal, thy pride, and thy folly carry thee? Is there more reason, more equity, more holiness in thy tradition, than in the holy, and just, and good commandments of God? Rom. 7. 12. Why then, I say, dost thou reject the commandment of God, to keep thine own tradition? Yea, why dost thou rage, and rail, and cry out, when men keep not thy law, or the rule of thine order, and tradition of thine elders; and yet shut thine eyes, or wink with

with them, when thou thyself shalt live in the breach of the law of God? Yea, why wilt thou condemn men, when they keep not thy law, but study for an excuse, yea, plead for them that live in the breach of God? Mark 7. 10, 11, 12, 13. Will this go for righteousness in the day of God Almighty? Nay, rather, will not this, like a mill-stone about thy neck, drawn thee in the deeps of hell? Oh, the blindness, the madness, the pride, that dwells in the hearts of these pretended righteous men?

Again, What kind of righteousness of thine is this that standeth in a misesteeming of God's commands? Some thou settest too high, and some too low; as in the text, thou hast set a ceremony above faith, above love, and above hope, in the mercy of God; when, as it is evident, the things last mentioned, are the things of the first rate, the weightier matters, Mat. 23. 17.

Again, Thou hast preferred the gold above the temple that sanctifieth the gold; and the gift upon the altar, above the altar that sanctifies the gift, Matth. 23. 17.

I say again, What kind of righteousness shall this be called? What back will such a suit of apparel fit, that is set, together to what it should be? Nor can other righteousness proceed, where a wrong judgement precedeth it.

This misplacing of God's laws cannot, I say, but produce misplaced obedience. It indeed produceth a monster, an ill shaped thing, unclean, and an abomination to the Lord. For see, saith he, (if thou wilt be making), that thou make all things according to the pattern shewn thee in the mount. Set faith, where faith should stand; a moral, where a moral should stand: and a ceremony, where a ceremony should stand: for this turning of things upside down, shall be esteemed as the potter's clay. And wilt thou call this thy righteousness? yea, wilt thou stand in this? wilt thou plead this? and venture an eternal concern in such a piece of linsley-woolsey as this? O fools, and blind!

But,

But, further, let us come a little closer to the point. O blind Pharisee, thou standest to thy righteousness; what dost thou mean? Wouldst thou have mercy for thy righteousness, or justice for thy righteousness.

If mercy, what mercy? Temporal things God giveth to the unthankful and unholy; nor doth he use to sell the world to man for righteousness. The earth hath he given to the children of men. But this is not the thing: thou wouldst have God think upon what an holy, what a good, what a righteous man thou art and hast been. But Christ died not for the good and righteous, nor did he come to call such to the banquet that grace hath prepared for the world. *I came not, I am not come* (saith Christ) *to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance*, Mark 2.; Rom. 5. Yet this is thy plea; Lord God, I am a righteous man, therefore grant me mercy, and a share in thy heavenly kingdom. What else dost mean, when thou sayst, *God I thank thee, that I am not as other men are?* Why dost thou rejoice, why art thou glad that thou art more righteous (if indeed thou art) than thy neighbour, if it is not because thou thinkest that thou hast got the start of thy neighbour, with reference to mercy; and that by thy righteousness thou hast insinuated thyself into God's affections, and procured an interest in his eternal favour? But,

What, what hast thou done by thy righteousness? I say, What hast thou given to God thereby? And what hath he received of thy hand? Perhaps thou wilt say, righteousness pleaseth God: but I answer no, not thine, with respect to justification from the curse of the law, unless it be as perfect as the justice it is yielded to, and as the law that doth command it. But thine is not such a righteousness: no, thine is speckled, thine is spotted, thine makes thee to look like a speckled bird in his eye-sight.

Thy righteousness has added iniquity, because it has kept thee from a belief of thy need of repentance, and because it has emboldened thee to thrust thyself audaciously into the presence of God, and made thee **even** before his holy eyes, which are so pure, that they

they cannot look on iniquity, Heb. 1. 13. to vaunt, boast, and brag of thyself, and of thy tottering, ragged, stinking uncleanness; for all our righteousnesses are as menstruous rags, because they flow from a thing, a heart, a man, that is unclean, But,

Again, Wouldst thou have mercy for thy righteousness? For whom wouldst thou have it: for another, or for thyself? If for another, (and it is most proper that a righteous man should intercede for another by his righteousness, rather than for himself), then thou thrustest Christ out of his place and office, and makest thyself to be a saviour in his stead; for a mediator there is already, even a mediator between God and man, and he is the man Christ Jesus.

But dost thou plead by thy righteousness, for mercy for thyself? Why, in doing so, thou impliest,

1. That thy righteousness can prevail with God, more than can thy sins; I say, that thy righteousness can prevail with God to preserve thee from death more than thy sins can prevail with him to condemn thee to it. And if so, what follows, but that thy righteousness is more, and has been done in a fuller spirit than ever were thy sins? But thus to insinuate, is to insinuate a lie; for there is no man, but while he is a sinner, sinneth with a more full spirit than a good man can act righteousness withal.

A sinner, when he sinneth, he doth it with all his heart, and with all his mind, and with all his soul, and with all his strength; nor hath he in his ordinary course any thing that bindeth. But with a good man it is not so; all and every whit of himself, neither is, nor can be, in every good duty that he doth. For when he would do good, evil is present with him. And again, *The flesh lusteth against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh, and these are contrary one to the other, so that ye cannot do the things that ye would,* Gal. 5. 17.

Now, if a good man cannot do good things with that oneness and universality of mind, as a wicked man doth sin with, then is his sin heavier to weigh him

him down to hell, than is his righteousness to buoy him up to the heavens.

And again, I say, if the righteousness of a good man comes short of his sin, both in number, weight, and measure, as it doth, (for a good man shrinks and quakes at the thoughts of God's entering into judgment with him, Psal. 143. 2.); then is his iniquity more than his righteousness. And I say again, if the sin of one that is truly gracious, and so of one that hath the best of principles, is heavier and mightier to destroy him, than is his righteousness to save him, how can it be that the Pharisee, that is not gracious, but a mere carnal man, (somewhat reformed and painted over with a few lean and low formalities), should with his empty, partial, hypocritical righteousness counterpoise his great, mighty, and weighty sins, that have cleaved to him in every state and condition of his, to make him odious in the sight of God?

2. Dost thou plead by thy righteousness for mercy for thyself? Why in so doing thou impliest, that mercy thou deserveest, and that is next door to, or almost as much as to say, God oweth me what I ask for. The best that can be put upon it, is, thou seekest security from the direful curse of God, as it were by the works of the law, Rom. 9. three last verses; and to be sure betwixt Christ and the law, thou wilt drop into hell. For he that seeks for mercy, as it were, and but as it were, by the works of the law, doth not altogether trust thereto. Nor doth he that seeks for that righteousness, that should save him as it were by the works of the law, seek it only wholly and solely at the hands of mercy.

So then, to seek for that that should save thee, neither at the hands of the law, nor at the hands of mercy, is to be sure to seek it where it is not to be found; for there is no medium betwixt the righteousness of the law and the mercy of God. Thou must have it either at the door of the law, or at the door of grace. But sayst thou, I am for having of it at the hands of both. I will trust solely to neither. I love to have two strings to my bow. If one of them, as you think, can help me by itself, my reason tells me

that both can help me better. Therefore will I be righteous and good, and will seek by my goodness to be commended to the mercy of God : for surely he that hath something of his own to ingratiate himself into the favour of his prince withal, shall sooner obtain his mercy and favour, than one that comes to him stripped of all good.

I answer, But there are not two ways to heaven : there is but one new and living way which Christ hath consecrated for us through the vail, that is to say, his flesh ; and besides that one, there is no more, Heb. 10. 19.—24. Why then dost thou talk of two strings to thy bow ? What became of him that had, and would have two stools to sit on ? yea, the text says plainly, that therefore they obtained not righteousness, because they sought it not by faith, but as it were by the works of the law. See here, they are disowned by the gospel, because they sought it not by faith, that is, by faith only. Again, the law, and the righteousness thereof, flies from them, (nor could they attain it, though they follow after it), because they sought it not by faith.

Mercy then is to be found alone in Jesus Christ. Again, the righteousness of the law is to be obtained only by faith of Jesus Christ ; that is, in the Son of God is the righteousness of the law to be found ; for he, by his obedience to his Father, is become the end of the law for righteousness. And for the sake of his legal righteousness, (which is also called the righteousness of God, because it was God in the flesh of Lord Jesus that did accomplish it), is mercy and grace from God extended to, whoever dependeth by faith upon God by this Jesus his righteousness for it. And hence it is, that we so often read, that this Jesus is the way to the Father ; that God, for Christ's sake, forgiveth us ; that by the obedience of one many are made righteous, or justified ; and that through this man is preached to us the forgiveness of sins ; and that by him all that believe are justified from all things from which they could not be justified by the law of Moses.

Now, though I here do make mention of righteousness and mercy, yet I hold there is but one way, to wit, to eternal life; which way, as I said, is Jesus Christ; for he is the new, the only new and living way to the Father of mercies, for mercy to make me capable of abiding with him in the heavens for ever and ever.

But sayst thou, I will be righteous in myself that I may have wherewith to commend me to God, when I go to him for mercy?

I answer, But thou blind Pharisee, I tell thee thou hast no understanding of God's design by the gospel, which is, not to advance man's righteousness, as thou dreamest, but to advance the righteousness of his Son, and his grace by him. Indeed, if God's design by the gospel was to exalt and advance man's righteousness, then that which thou hast said would be to the purpose; for what greater dignity can be put upon man's righteousness, than to admit it?

I say then, for God to admit it, to be an advocate, an intercessor, a mediator; for all these are they which prevail with God to shew me mercy. But this God never thought of, much less could he thus design by the gospel; for the text runs flat against it. Not of works, not of works of righteousness, which we have done; not of works, lest any one should boast, saying, Well I may thank my own good life for mercy. It was partly for the sake of my own good deeds that I obtained mercy to be in heaven and glory. Shall this be the burden of the song of heaven? or is this that which is composed by that glittering heavenly host, and which we have read of in the holy book of God? No, no; that song runs upon other feet, standeth in far better strains, being composed of far higher and truly heavenly matter: For God *has predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, to the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the Beloved: In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches*

of his grace, Ephes. 1. And it is requisite, that the song be framed accordingly; wherefore he saith, that the heavenly song runs thus: *Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof; for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood, out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; and hast made us kings and priests unto our God; and we shall reign on the earth, Rev. 5. 9, 10.*

He saith not that they have redeemed, or helped to redeem and deliver themselves; but that the Lamb, the Lamb that was slain; the Lamb only was he that redeemed them. Nor saith he, that they had made themselves kings and priests unto God to offer any oblation, sacrifice, or offering whatsoever, but that the same Lamb had made them such: For they, as is insinuated by the text, were in, among, one with, and no better, than the kindreds, tongues, nations, and people of the earth. Better! No, in no wise, saith Paul, Rom. 3. 9. therefore their separation from them was of mere mercy, free grace, good will, and distinguishing love; not for, or because of works of righteousness which any of them have done; no, they were all alike. But these, because beloved, when in their blood, (according to Ezek. 16.), were separated by free grace; and as another scripture hath it, *redeemed from the earth, and from among men by blood, Rev. 14. 3, 4.* Wherefore deliverance from the ireful wrath of God must not, neither in whole nor in part, be ascribed to the whole law, or to all the righteousness that comes by it; but to this Lamb of God, Jesus, the Saviour of the world; for it is *he that delivereth us from the wrath to come; and that according to God's appointment; for God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by (or through) our Lord Jesus Christ, 1 Thess. 1. 10.; & 5. 9.* Let every man, therefore, take heed what he doth, and whereon he layeth the stress of his salvation; *For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ, 1 Cor. 3. 11.*

But dost thou plead still as thou didst before, and
3 1 2 wilt

wilt thou stand thereto? Why then, thy design must overcome God, or God's design must overcome thee. Thy design is to give thy good life, thy good deeds, a part of the glory of thy justification from the curse. And God's design is to throw all thy righteousness out into the street, into the dirt and dunghill, as to that thou art for glory, and for glorying here before God; yea, thou art sharing in the glory of justification when that alone belongeth to God. And he hath said, *My glory will I not give to another*. Thou wilt not trust wholly to God's grace in Christ for justification; and God will not take thy stinking righteousness in as a partner in thy acquitment from sin, death, wrath, and hell. Now the question is, Who shall prevail? God, or the Pharisee? and whose word shall stand? his, or the Pharisee's?

Alas! the Pharisee here must needs come down, for God is greater than all. Also, he hath said, that no flesh shall glory in his presence; and that he will have mercy, and not sacrifice. And again, *that it is not (nor shall be) in him that wills, nor in him that runs, but in God that sheweth mercy*. What hope, help, stay, or relief, then is there left for the merit-monger? What twig, or straw, or twined thread, is left to be a stay for his soul? This besom will sweep away his cobweb: The house that this spider doth so lean upon, will now be overturned, and he in it, to hell-fire; for nothing less than everlasting damnation is designed by God, and that for this fearful and unbelieving Pharisee; God will prevail against him for ever.

3. But wilt thou yet plead thy righteousness for mercy? Why, in so doing thou takest away from God the power of giving mercy. For if it be thine as wages, it is no longer his to dispose of at pleasure; for that which another man oweth me, is in equity not at his, but at my disposal. Did I say, that by this thy plea thou takest away from God the power of giving mercy? I will add, yea, and also of disposing of heaven and life eternal. And then, I pray you, what is left unto God, and what can he call his

own?

own? Not mercy, for that by thy good deeds thou hast purchased: Not heaven, for that by thy good deeds thou hast purchased: Not eternal life, for that by thy good deeds thou hast purchased. Thus, Pharisee, (O thou self-righteous man), hast thou set up thyself above grace, mercy, heaven, glory; yea above even God himself, for the purchaser should in reason be esteemed above the purchase.

Awake, man! What hast thou done? Thou hast blasphemed God; thou has undervalued the glory of his grace; thou hast, what in thee lieth, opposed the glorious design of heaven; thou hast sought to make thy filthy rags to share in thy justification.

Now, all these are mighty sins; these have made thine iniquity infinite. What wilt thou do? Thou hast created to thyself a world of needless miseries. I call them needless, because thou hadst more than enough before. Thou hast set thyself against God in a way of contending, thou standest upon thy points and pantables; thou wilt not bate God an ace of what thy righteousness is worth, and wilt also make it worth what thyself shalt list: Thou wilt be thine own judge, as to the worth of thy righteousness; thou wilt neither hear what verdict the word has passed about it, nor wilt thou endure that God should throw it out in the matter of thy justification, but quarrellest with the doctrine of free grace, or else dost wrest it out of its place to serve thy Pharisaical designs; saying, *God, I thank thee, I am not as other men*; fathering upon thyself, yea, upon God and thyself, a stark lie; for thou art as other men are, though not in this, yet in that; yea, in a far worse condition than the most of men are. Nor will it help thee any thing to attribute this thy goodness to the God of heaven; for that is but a mere toying; the truth is, the God that thou intendest is nothing but thy righteousness; and the grace that thou supposest is nothing but thine own good and honest intentions. So that,

4. In all that thou sayst thou dost but play the downright hypocrite: Thou pretendest indeed to mercy, but thou intendest nothing but merit: Thou seemest

seemest to give the glory to God, but at the same time takest it all to thyself: Thou despisest others, and criest up thyself, and in conclusion fatterest all upon God by word, and upon thyself in truth. Nor is there any thing more common among this sort of men, than to make God, his grace, and kindness, the stalking-horse to their own praise, saying, God, I thank thee, when they trust to themselves that they are righteous, and have not need of any repentance; when the truth is, they are the worst sort of men in the world, because they put themselves into such a state as God hath not put them into, and then impute it to God, saying, God, I thank thee, that thou hast done it; for what greater sin than to make God a liar, or than to father that upon God which he never meant, intended, or did: And all this under a colour to glorify God, when there is nothing else designed, but to take all glory from him, and to wear it on thine own head as a crown, and a diadem, in the face of the whole world.

A self-righteous man, therefore, can come to God for mercy no otherwise than fawningly: For what need of mercy hath a righteous man? Let him then talk of mercy, of grace, and goodness, and come in an hundred times with his, *God, I thank thee*, in his mouth, all is but words, there is no sense, nor favour, nor relish, of mercy and favour; nor doth he in truth, from his very heart, understand the nature of mercy, nor what is an object thereof; but when he thanks God, he praises himself; when he pleads for mercy, he means his own merit: And all this is manifest from what doth follow; for, saith he, I am not as this Publican: Thence clearly insinuating, that not the good, but the bad, should be rejected of the God of heaven: That not the bad but the good, not the sinner, but the self-righteous, are the most proper objects of God's favour. The same thing is done by others in this our day: Favour, mercy, grace, and *God I thank thee*, is in their mouths, but their own strength, sufficiency, free-will, and the like, they are the things they mean by all such high and glorious expressions.

But,

But, secondly, If thy plea be not for mercy, but for justice, then to speak a little to that—Justice has measures and rules to go by; unto which measures and rules, if thou comest not up, justice can do thee no good. Come then, O thou blind Pharisee, let us pass away a few minutes in some discourse about this. Thou demandest justice, because God hath said, that the man that doth these things shall live in and by them. And again, the doers of the law shall be justified, not in a way of mercy, but in a way of justice. He shall live by them. But what hast thou done, O blind Pharisee? What hast thou done, that thou art emboldened to venture, to stand and fall to the most perfect justice of God? Hast thou fulfilled the whole law, and not offended in one point? Hast thou purged thyself from the pollutions and motions of sin that dwell in thy flesh, and work in thy own members? Is the very being of sin rooted out of thy tabernacle? And art thou now as perfectly innocent as ever was Jesus Christ? Hast thou, by suffering the uttermost punishment that justice could justly lay upon thee for thy sins, made fair and full satisfaction to God, according to the tenor of his law, for thy transgressions? If thou hast done all these things, then thou mayst plead something, and yet but something, for thyself, in a way of justice. Nay, in this I will assert nothing, but will rather inquire: What hast thou gained by all this thy righteousness? (We will now suppose what must not be granted: Was not this thy state when thou wast in thy first parents? Wast thou not innocent, perfectly innocent and righteous? And if thou shouldst be so now, what hast thou gained thereby? Suppose that the man that had, forty years ago, forty pounds of his own, and had spent it all since, should yet be able now to shew his forty pounds again; what has he got thereby, or how much richer is he at last, than he was when he first set up for himself? Nay, doth not the blot of his ill living betwixt his first and his last, lie as a blemish upon him, unless he should redeem himself also by works of supererogation, from the scandal that justice may lay at his door for that?

But,

But,

But, I say, suppose, O Pharisee, this should be thy case, yet God is not bound to give thee in justice that eternal life, which by his grace he bestoweth upon those that have redemption from sin, by the blood of his Son. In justice therefore, when all comes to all, thou canst require no more than an endless life in an earthly paradise; for there thou wast set up at first; nor doth it appear from what hath been said, touching all that thou hast done or canst do, that thou deservest a better place.

Did I say, that thou may'st require justly an endless life in an earthly paradise? Why? I must add to that saying, this proviso, If thou continuest in the law, and in the righteousness thereof; else not.

But how dost thou know that thou shalt continue therein? Thou hast no promise from God's mouth for that; nor is grace or strength ministered to mankind by the covenant that thou art under. So that still thou standest bound to thy good behaviour; and in the day that thou dost give the first, though never so little a trip, or stumble in thy obedience, thou forfeitest thine interest in paradise, (and in justice), as to any benefit there.

But alas! what need is there that we should thus talk of things, when it is manifest, that thou hast sinned, not only before thou wast a Pharisee, but when after the most strictest sect of thy religion thou livest also a Pharisee; yea, and now in the temple, in thy prayer there, thou shewest thyself to be full of ignorance, pride, self-conceit, and horrible arrogancy, and desire of vain glory, &c. which are none of them the seat or fruit of righteousness, but the seat of the devil, and the fruit of his dwelling, even at this time in thy heart.

Could it ever have been imagined, that such audacious impudence could have put itself forth in any mortal man, in his approach unto God by prayer, as has shewed itself in thee? *I am not as other men,* sayst thou! But is this the way to go to God in prayer? *The prayer of the upright is God's delight.*

But

But the upright man glorifies God's justice, by confessing to God the vileness and pollution of his state and condition: He glorifies God's mercy, by acknowledging, that that, and that only, as communicated of God by Christ to sinners, can save and deliver from the curse of the law.

This, I say, is the sum of the prayer of the just and upright man, Job 1. 8.; & 40. 4.; Acts 13 22.; Psal. 38.; Psal. 41.; 2 Sam. 6. 21, 22.; and not as thou most vain-gloriously vauntest, with thy, *God, I thank thee, I am not as other men are.*

True, when a man is accused by his neighbours, by a brother, by an enemy, and the like, if he be clear, (and he may be so, as to what they shall lay to his charge), then let him vindicate, justify, and acquit himself, to the utmost that in justice and truth he can; for his name, the preservation whereof is more to be chosen than silver and gold; also his profession, yea, the name of God too, and religion, may now lie at stake, by reason of such false accusations, and perhaps can by no means (as to this man) be covered, and vindicated from reproach and scandal, but by his justifying of himself. Wherefore, in such a work, a man serveth God, and saves religion from hurt; yea, as he that is a professor, and has his profession attended with a scandalous life, hurteth religion thereby, so he that has his profession attended with a good life, and shall suffer it notwithstanding to lie under blame by false accusations, when it is in the power of his hand to justify himself, hurteth religion also. But the case of the Pharisee is otherwise. He is not here a-dealing with men, but God; not seeking to stand clear in the sight of the world, but in the sight of heaven itself; and that too, not with respect to what men or angels, but with respect to what God and his law could charge him with, and justly lay at his door.

This therefore mainly altereth the case; for a man here to stand thus upon his point, it is death; for he affronteth God, he giveth him the lie, he reproveth the law; and, in sum, accuseth it of bearing false

witness against him; he doth this, I say, even by saying, *God, I thank thee, I am not as other men are;* for God hath made none of this difference. The law condemneth all men as sinners, testifieth, that every imagination of the thought of the heart of the sons of men is only evil, and that continually; wherefore they that do as the Pharisee did, to wit, seek to justify themselves before God from the curse of the law, by their own good doings, though they also, as the Pharisee did, seem to give God the thanks for all; yet do most horribly sin, even by their so doing, and shall receive a Pharisee's reward at last. Wherefore, O thou Pharisee, it is a vain thing for thee either to think of, or to ask for, at God's hand, either mercy or justice. Because mercy thou canst not ask for, from sense of want of mercy, because thy righteousness, which is by the law, hath utterly blinded thine eyes, and complimenting with God doth nothing; and as for justice, that can do thee no good; but the more just God is, and the more by that he acteth towards thee, the more miserable and fearful will be thy condition, because of the deficiency of thy so much, by thee, esteemed righteousness.

What a deplorable condition then is a poor Pharisee in! For mercy he cannot pray, he cannot pray for it with all his heart; for he seeth indeed no need thereof. True, the Pharisee, though he was impudent enough, yet would not take all from God; he would still count, that there was due to him a tribute of thanks: *God I thank thee*, saith he: but yet not a bit of this for mercy; but for that he had let him live, (for I know not for what he did thank himself), till he had made himself better than other men. But that betterment was a betterment in none other judgement than that of his own, and that was none other but such an one as was false. So then the Pharisee is by this time quite out of doors; his righteousness is worth nothing, his prayer is worth nothing, his thanks to God are worth nothing; for that what he had was scanty, and imperfect, and it was his pride that made him offer it to God for acceptance

nor could his fawning thanksgiving better his case, or make his matter at all good before God.

But I'll warrant you, the Pharisee was so far off from thinking thus of himself, and of his righteousness, that he thought of nothing so much as of this, that he was a happy man; yea, happier by far than other his fellow rationals: yea, he plainly declares it, when he saith, *God I thank thee, I am not as other men are.*

O what a fool's paradise was the heart of the Pharisee now in, while he stood in the temple praying to God! *God, I thank thee*, said he; for I am good and holy; I am a righteous man; I have been full of good works; *I am no extortioner, unjust, nor adulterer, nor yet as this wretched Publican.* I have kept myself strictly to the rule of mine order, and my order is the most strict of all orders now in being: I fast, I pray, I give tithes of all I possess. Yea, so forward am I to be a religious man, so ready have I been to listen after my duty, that I have asked both of God and man the ordinances of judgement and justice; I take delight in approaching to God. What less now can be mine than the heavenly kingdom and glory!

Now the Pharisee, like Haman, saith in his heart, *To whom would the king delight to do honour, more than to myself? Where is the man that so pleaseth God, and consequently, that in equity and reason should be beloved of God like me?* Thus like the prodigal's brother, he pleadeth, saying, *Lo, these many years do I serve thee, neither transgressed I at any time thy commandments*, Luke 15. 29. O brave Pharisee! but go on in thine oration: nor yet as this Publican.

Poor wretch, quoth the Pharisee to the Publican, What comest thou for? Dost think that such a sinner as thou art shalt be heard of God? God heareth not sinners; but if any man be a worshipper of God, (as I am, as I thank God I am), him he heareth. Thou, for thy part, hast been a rebel all thy days: I abhor to come nigh thee, or to touch thy garments. Stand

by thyself, come not near me, for I am more holy than thou, Isa. 65. 5.

Hold, stop there, go no further : fie Pharisee, fie ! dost thou know before whom thou standest, to whom thou speakest, and of what the matter of thy silly oration is made ? Thou art now before God, thou speakest now to God, and therefore in justice and honesty thou shouldst make mention of his righteousness, not of thine ; of his righteousness, and of his only.

I am sure Abraham, of whom thou sayest he is thy father, never had the face to do as thou hast done, though it is to be presumed he had more cause so to do, than thou hast, or canst have. Abraham had whereof to glory, but not before God ; yea ; he was called God's friend, and yet would not glory before him ; but humbleth himself, was afraid, and trembled in himself, when he stood before him, acknowledging of himself to be but dust and ashes, Gen. 18. 28, 30, 32. ; Rom. 4. 1, 2. ; but thou, as thou hast quite forgot that thou wast framed of that matter, and after the manner of other men, standest and pleadest thy goodness before him. Be ashamed Pharisee ! Dost thou think that God hath eyes of flesh, or that he seeth as man sees ? Are not the secrets of thy heart open unto him ? Thinkest thou with thyself that thou, with a few of thy defiled ways, canst cover thy rotten wall, that thou hast daubed with untempered mortar, and so hide the dirt thereof from his eyes ; or that these fine, smooth, and oily words, that come out of thy mouth, will make him forget that thy throat is an open sepulchre, and that thou within art full of dead mens bones, and all uncleanness ? Thy thus cleansing of the outside of the cup and platter, and thy garnishing of the sepulchres of the righteous, is nothing at all in God's eyes, but things that manifest, that thou art a hypocrite, and blind, because thou takest no notice of that which is within, which yet is that which is most abominable to God. For the fruit, alas ! what is the fruit of the tree, or what are the streams of the fountain ! Thy fountain is defiled ; yea, a defiler, and so that which

maketh

maketh the whole self, with thy works, unclean in God's sight.

But, Pharisee, how comes it to pass, that the poor Publican is now so much a mote in thine eye, that thou canst not forbear, but must accuse him before the judgement of God; for in that thou sayest, *that thou art not even as this Publican*, thou bringest in an accusation, a charge, a bill, against him? What has he done? Has he concealed any of thy righteousness? or has he secretly informed against thee, that thou art an hypocrite and superstitious? I dare say, the poor wretch has neither meddled nor made with thee in these matters.

But what aileth the Pharisee? Doth the poor Publican stand to vex thee? doth he touch thee with his dirty garments? or, doth he annoy thee with his stinking breath? Doth his posture of standing so like a man condemned offend thee? True, he now standeth with his hand held up at God's bar, he pleads guilty to all that is laid to his charge.

He cannot strut, vapour, and swagger as thou dost? but why offended at this? Oh, but he has been a naughty man! and I have been righteous, sayest thou. Well, Pharisee, well, his naughtiness shall not be laid to thy charge, if thou hast chose none of his ways. But since thou wilt yet bear me down, that thou art righteous, shew now, even now, while thou standest before God with the Publican, some, though they be but small, yea, though but very small fruits of thy righteousness. Let the Publican alone, since he is speaking for his life before God. Or if thou canst not let him alone, yet do not speak against him; for thy so doing will but prove, that thou rememberest the evil that the man has done unto thee; yea, and that thou bearest him a grudge for it too; and while you stand before God.

But, Pharisee, the righteous man is a merciful man, and while he standeth praying, he forgiveth; yea, and also crieth to God that he will forgive him too, Mark 11. 25, 26; Acts 7. 60. Hitherto then thou hast shewed none of the fruits of thy righteousness

to

ness. Pharisee, righteousness would teach thee to love this Publican, but thou shewest that thou hatest him. Love covereth the multitude of sins; but hatred and unfaithfulness revealeth secrets.

Pharisee, thou shouldst have remembered this thy brother in this his day of adversity, and shouldst have shewed, that thou hadst compassion on thy brother in this his deplorable condition; but thou, like the proud, the cruel, and arrogant man, hast taken thy neighbour at the advantage, and that when he is even between the straits, and standing upon the pinnacle of difficulty, betwixt Heaven and Hell, and hast done what thou couldst, what on thy part lay, to thrust him down to the deep, saying, *I am not even as this Publican.*

What cruelty can be greater; what rage more furious; and what spite and hatred more damnable and implacable, than to follow, or take a man while he is asking of mercy at God's hands, and to put in a caveat against his obtaining of it, by exclaiming against him that he is a sinner? The master of righteousness doth not so: *Do not think*, saith he, *that I will accuse you to the Father*, The scholars of righteousness do not so. *But as for me*, said David, *when they mine enemies were sick, and the Publican here was sick of the most malignant disease, my clothing was of sackcloth, I humbled my soul with fasting and my prayer to wit, that I made for them returned into my bosom. I behaved myself as though he had been my friend and brother; I bowed down heavily, as one that mourneth for his mother*, John 5. 45: Psal. 35. 13, 14.

Pharisee, dost thou see here how contrary thou art to righteous men? Now then, where shall we find out one to parallel thee, but by finding him out that is called the *dragon*; for he it is that accuseth the poor sinners before God? Zech. 3.; Rev. 12.

I am not as this Publican, Modesty should have commanded thee to have bit thy tongue as to this. What could the angels think, but that revenge was now in thine heart, and but that thou comest up in

ness.

to the temple, rather to boast of thyself and accuse thy neighbour, than to pray to the God of heaven; for what one petition is there in all thy prayer, that gives the least intimation, that thou hast the knowledge of God or thyself? Nay, what petition of any kind is there in thy vain-glorious oration from first to last? only an accusation drawn up, and that against one helpless and forlorn; against a poor man, because he is a sinner; drawn up, I say, against him by thee, who canst not make proof of thyself that thou art righteous; But come to proofs of righteousness, and thou art wanting also. What, though thy raiment is better than his, thy skin may be full as black; yea, what if thy skin be whiter than his, thy heart may be yet far blacker. Yea, it is so, for the truth hath spoken it; for *within you are full of excess and all uncleannesses*, Matth. 23.

Pharisee, there are transgressions against the second table, and the Publican shall be guilty of them: but there are sins also against the first table, and thou thyself art guilty of them.

The Publican, in that he was an extortioner, unjust, and an adulterer, made it thereby manifest that he did not love his neighbour; and thou by making a god, a saviour, a deliverer, of thy filthy righteousness, dost make it appear, that thou dost not love thy God; for as he that taketh, or that derogateth from his neighbour in that which is neighbour's due, sinneth against his neighbour; so he that taketh or derogateth from God, sinneth against God.

Now then, though thou hast not, as thou dost imagine, played at that low game as to derogate from thy neighbour; yet thou hast played at that high game as to derogate from thy God; for thou hast robbed God of the glory of salvation; yea, declared, that as to that there is no trust to be put in him. So *this is the man that made not God his strength; but trusted to the abundance of his riches, and strengthened himself in his wickedness of substance*, Ps. 51. 7.

What else means this great bundle of thy own righteousness, which thou hast brought with thee in-

to the temple? yea, what means else thy commend-
ing of thyself because of that, and so thy implicit
prayer, that thou for that mightest find acceptance
with God?

All this, what does it argue, I say, but thy diffi-
dence of God? and that thou countest salvation safer
in thine own righteousness, than in the righteousness
of God? and that thy own love to, and care of thy
own soul, is far greater, and so much better, than
is the care and love of God? And is this to keep the
first table; yea, the first branch of that table, which
saith, *Thou shalt love the Lord thy God?* for thy thus
doing cannot stand with love to God.

How can that man say, I love God, who from his
very heart shrinketh to trust in him? Or, How can
that man say, I would glorify God, who in his very
heart refuseth to stand and fall by his mercy?

Suppose a great man should bid all the poor of the
parish to his house to dinner, and should moreover
send by the mouth of his servant, saying, *My lord
hath killed his fatlings, hath furnished his table, and
prepared his wine, nor is there want of any thing,
come to the banquet:* Would it not be counted as an
high affront to, great contempt of, and much distrust
in the goodness of the man of the house, if some of
these guests should take with them, out of their own
poor store, some of their mouldy crusts, and carry
them with them, lay them on their trenchers upon
the table before the lord of the feast, and the rest of
his guests, out of fear that he yet would not provide
sufficiently for those he had bidden to the dinner that
he made?

Why, Pharisee, this is the very case; thou hast
been called to a banquet, even to the banquet of
God's grace, and thou hast been disposed to go; but
behold, thou hast not believed, that he would of his
own cost make thee a feast, when thou comest: where-
fore of thy own store thou hast brought with thee,
and hast laid upon thy trencher on his table, thy
mouldy crusts in the presence of the angels, and of
this poor Publican; yea, and hath vauntingly said u-
pon

pon the whole, *God, I thank thee, I am not as other men are.* I am no such needy man, Luke 15. 7. I am no extortioner, nor unjust, nor adulterer, nor even as this Publican. I am come indeed to thy feast, for of civility I could do no less; but for thy dainties, I need them not, I have of such things enough of mine own, Luke 18. 9. I thank thee therefore for thy offer of kindness, but I am not as those that have, and stand in need thereof, *nor yet as this Publican.* And thus feeding upon thine own fare, or by making a composition of his and thine together, thou contemnest God, thou countest him insufficient or unfaithful; that is, either one that has not enough, or having it, will not bestow it upon the poor and needy; and therefore, of mere pretence thou goest to his banquet, but yet trustest to thy own, and to that only.

This is to break the first table; and so to make thyself a sinner of the highest form: for the sins against the first table, are sins of an higher nature than are the sins against the second. True, the sins of the second table are also sins against God, because they are sins against the commandments of God: But the sins that are against the first table, are sins not only against the command, but against the very love, strength, holiness, and faithfulness of God: And herein stands thy condition; thou hast not, thou sayest thou hast not done injury to thy neighbour; but what of that, *if thou hast reproached thy maker?*

Pharisee, I will assure thee, thou art besides the saddle; thy state is not good, thy righteousness is so far off from doing any good, that it maketh thee to be a greater sinner, because it signifieth more immediately against the mercy, the love, the grace, and goodness of God, than the sins of other sinners, as to degree, do.

And as they are more odious and abominable in the sight of God, (as they needs must, if what is said be true, as it is), so they are more dangerous to the life and soul of man; for that they always appear unto him in whom they dwell, and to him that trusteth in them, not to be sins and transgressions, but virtues

and excellent things; not things that set a man further off, but the things that bring a man nearer God, than those that want them are or can be.

This therefore is the dangerous estate of those that go about to establish their own righteousness, that neither have, nor can, while they are so doing, submit themselves to the righteousness of God, Rom. 10. 3. It is far more easy to persuade a poor wretch, whose life is debauched, and sins are written in his forehead, to submit to the righteousness of God, (that is, to the righteousness that is of God's providing and giving), than it is to persuade a self-righteous man to do it; for the profane is sooner convinced of the necessity of righteousness to save him, as that he has none of his own, and accepteth of, and submitteth himself to the help, and salvation, that is in the righteousness and obedience of another.

And upon this account it is that Christ saith, *The publicans and harlots* enter into the kingdom of heaven before the scribes and Pharisees, Matth. 21. 31. Poor Pharisee, what a loss art thou at? thou art not only a sinner, but a sinner of the highest form. Not a sinner by such sins, (by such sins chiefly), as the second table doth make manifest; but a sinner chiefly in that way, as no self-righteous man did ever dream of. For when the righteous man or Pharisee shall hear that he is a sinner, he replieth, *I am not as other men are.*

And because the common and more ordinary description of sin is the transgression against the second table, he presently replieth again, *I am not as this Publican is;* and so shrowdeth himself under his own lame endeavours, and ragged partial patches of moral or civil righteousness. Wherefore, when he heareth, that his righteousness is condemned, slighted, and accounted nothing worth, then he fretteth, and fumeth, and would kill the man that so slighteth and disdaineth his goodly righteousness; but Christ, and the true gospel-teacher still goeth on, and condemneth all his righteousness as menstrous rags, an abomination to God, and nothing but loss and dung.

Now menstrous rags, things that are an abomination, and dung, are not fit matter to make a garment of to wear, when I come to God for life, much less to be made my friend, my advocate, my mediator and spokesman, when I stand betwixt heaven and hell, Isa. 64. 5.; Luke 16. 15.; Phil. 3. 6, 7, 8. to plead for me that I might be saved.

Perhaps some will blame me, and count me also worthy thereof, because I do not distinguish betwixt the matter and the manner of the Pharisee's righteousness. And let them condemn me still, for saving the holy law, which is neither the matter nor manner of the Pharisee's righteousness, but rather the rules (if he will live thereby) up to which he should completely come in every thing that he doth. And I say again, that the whole of the Pharisee's righteousness is sinful, though not with and to men, yet with and before the God of heaven. Sinful, I say it is, and abominable, both in itself, and also in its effects.

1. In itself; for that it is imperfect, scanty, and short of the rule by which righteousness is enjoined, and even with which every act should be; for shortness here, even every shortness in these duties, is sin and sinful weakness; wherefore the curse taketh hold of the man for coming short, but that it could not justly do, if his coming short was not his sin: *Cursed is every one that doth not, and that continueth not to do all things written in the law*, Deut. 27. 26.; Gal. 3. 10.

2. It is sinful; because it is wrought by sinful flesh; for all legal righteousness is a work of the flesh, Rom. 4. 1.; Phil. 3. 3, 4,—8.

A work, I say, of the flesh; even of that flesh, who, or which also committeth the greatest enormities: for the flesh is but one, though its workings are divers: Sometimes in a way most notoriously sensual and devilish, causing the soul to wallow in the mire.

But these are not all the works of the flesh; the flesh sometimes will attempt to be righteous, and set upon doing actions, that in their perfection would be

very glorious and beautiful to behold. But because the law is only commanding words, and yieldeth no help to the man that attempts to perform it; and because the flesh is weak, and cannot do of itself that, therefore this most glorious work of the flesh faileth.

But, I say, as it is a work of the flesh it cannot be good; forasmuch as the hand that worketh it is defiled with sin: For in a good man, one spiritually good, *that is in his flesh, there dwells no good thing*, but consequently that which is bad; how then can the flesh of a carnal, graceless man, (and such a one is every Pharisee and self-righteous man in the world), produce, though it joineth itself to the law, to the righteous law of God, that which is good in his sight?

If any shall think that I pinch so hardly, because I call man's righteousness which is of the law, of the righteous law of God, flesh, let them consider that which follows; to wit, That though man by sin is said *to be dead in sin and trespasses*, yet not so dead but that he can act still in his own sphere; that is, to do, and chuse to do, either that what by all men is counted base, or that which by some is counted good, though he is not, nor can all the world make him capable of doing any thing that may please his God.

Man, by nature, as dead as he is, can, and that with the will of his flesh, will his own salvation. Man, by nature, can, and that by the power of the flesh, pursue and follow after his own salvation; but then he wills it, and pursues or follows after it, not in God's way, but his own; not by faith in Christ, but by the law of Moses. See Rom. 9. 16, 31.; & 10. 3, 7.

Wherefore it is no error to say, that a man naturally has will, and a power to pursue his will, and that as to his own salvation. But it is a damnable error to say, that he hath will and power to pursue it, and that in God's way: For then we must hold that the mysteries of the gospel are natural; for that natural men, or men by nature, may apprehend and know them, yea, and know them to be the only

mea

means by which they must obtain eternal life; for the understanding must act before the will; yea, a man must approve of the way to life by Jesus Christ, before his mind will budge, or stir, or move, that way: *But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, (of the gospel), for they are foolishness to him, neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.*

He receiveth not these things; that is, his mind and will lie cross unto them, for he counts them foolishness; nor can all the natural wisdom in the world cause that his will should fall in with them, because it cannot discern them.

Nature discerneth the law, and the righteousness thereof; yea, it discerneth it, and approveth thereof; that is, that the righteousness of it is the best and only way to life, and therefore the natural will and power of the flesh, as here you see in the Pharisee, do steer their course by that to eternal life, 1 Cor. 2. 24.

The righteousness of the law, therefore, is a work of the flesh, a work of sinful flesh, and therefore must needs be as filth and dung, and abominable as to that for which this man hath produced it, and presented it in the temple before God.

Nor is the Pharisee alone entangled in this mischief; many souls are by these works of the flesh flattered, as also the Pharisee was, into an opinion, that their state is good, when there is nothing in it. The most that their conversion amounteth to, is, the Publican is become a Pharisee; the open sinner is become a self-righteous man. Of the black side of the flesh he hath had enough, now therefore with the white side of the flesh he will recreate himself. And now, most wicked must he needs be, that questioneth the goodness of the state of such a man. He, of a drunkard, a swearer, an unclean person, a Sabbath-breaker, a liar, and the like, is become reformed, a lover of righteousness, a strict observer, doer, and trader in the formalities of the law, and a herder with men of his complexion. And now he is become

a great exclaimer against sin and sinners, denying to be acquaint with those that once were his companions, saying, *I am not even as this Publican.*

To turn therefore from sin to man's righteousness, yea to rejoice in confidence, that thy state is better than is that of the Publican; I mean, better in the eyes of divine justice, and in the judgement of the law; and yet to be found by the law, not in the spirit, but in the flesh; not in Christ, but under the law; not in a state of salvation, but of damnation, is common among men: For they, and they only, are the right men, *who worship God in the Spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh.* Where by *flesh*, must not be meant the horrible transgressions against the law, (though they are also called *the works of the flesh*, Gal. 4. 19.), for they minister no occasion unto men to have confidence in them towards God: But that is that which is insinuated by Paul, where he saith, he had *no confidence in the flesh*, though he might have had it, as he said, *though I also might have confidence in the flesh.* If any other man, saith he, *thinketh that he hath whereof he might trust in the flesh, I more*, Phil. 3. 3, 4.; and then he repeats a two-fold privilege that he had by the flesh.

1. That he was one of the seed of Abraham, and of the tribe of Benjamin, an Hebrew of the Hebrews, &c.

2. That he had fallen in with the strictest men of that religion, which was such after the flesh, to wit, to be a Pharisee, and was the son of a Pharisee, had much fleshly zeal for God, and *touching the righteousness which is of the law blameless*, Phil. 3. 3, 5, 6.

But I say still, there is nothing but flesh; fleshly privileges and fleshly righteousness, and so consequently a fleshly confidence, and trust for heaven. This is manifest when the man had his eyes enlightened, he counted all loss and dung that he might be found in Christ, not having his own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith.

And

And this leads me to another thing, and that is, to tell thee, O thou blind Pharisee, that thou canst not be in a safe condition, because thou hast thy confidence in the flesh, that is, in the righteousness of the flesh. *For all flesh is grass, and all the glory of it as the flower of the field;* and the flesh, and the glory of that being as weak as the grass, which to-day is, and to-morrow is cast into the oven, is but a weak business for a man to venture his eternal salvation upon. Wherefore, as I also hinted before, the godly-wise have been afraid to be found in their righteousness, I mean their own personal righteousness, though that is far better than can be the righteousness of any carnal man: For the godly man's righteousness is wrought by the Spirit and faith of Christ, but the ungodly man's righteousness is of the flesh, and of the law. Yet I say, this godly man is afraid to stand by his righteousness before the tribunal of God, as is manifest in these following particulars.

1. He sees sin in his righteousness, for so the prophet intimates, when he saith, *All our righteousnesses are as filthy rags*, Isa. 64. but there is nothing can make one's righteousness filthy but sin. It is not the poor, the low, the mean, the sickly, the beggarly state of a man, nor yet his being hated of devils, persecuted of men, broken under necessities, reproaches, distresses, or any kind of trouble of this nature that can make the godly man's righteousness filthy; nothing but sin can do it, and that can, doth, hath, and will do it. Nor can any man, be he who he will, and though he watches, prays, strives, denies himself, and puts his body under what chastisement or hardships he can; yea, though he also get his spirit and soul hoisted up to the highest peg or pin of sanctity, and holy contemplation, and so his lusts to the greatest degree of mortification; but sin will be with him in the best of his performances: with him, I say, to pollute and defile his duties, and to make his righteousness speckled and spotted, filthy and menstruous.

I will give you two or three instances for this.

(1.) Nehemiah

(1.) Nehemiah was a man, (in his day), one that was zealous, very zealous, for God, for his house, for his people, and for his ways; and so continued, and that from first to last, as they may see that please to read the relation of his actions; yet when he comes seriously to be concerned with God about his duties, he relinquisheth a standing by them. True, he mentioneth them to God, but confesseth that there are imperfections in them, and prayeth that God will not wipe them away. *Wipe not out my good deeds, O my God, that I have done for the house of my God, and for the offices thereof.* And again, *Remember me, O my God, concerning this also, (another good deed), and spare me according to the greatness of thy mercies; and remember me, O my God, for good, Neh. 13.*

I do not think that by these prayers he pleadeth for an acceptance of his person, as touching justification from the curse of the law, (as the poor blind Pharisee doth), but that God would accept of his service, as he was a son, and not deny to give him a reward of grace for what he had done, since he was pleased to declare in his testament, that he would reward the labour of love of his saints with an exceeding weight of glory; and therefore prayeth, that God would not wipe away his good deeds, but remember him for good, according to the greatness of his mercy.

(2.) A second instance is that of David, where he saith, *Enter not into judgement with thy servant, O Lord; for in thy sight shall no man living be justified, Psal. 143. 2.* David, as I also have hinted before, is said to be a man after God's own heart, Acts 13, and as here by the Spirit he acknowledges him for his servant; yet behold how he shrinketh, how he draweth back, how he prayeth, and petitioneth, that God would vouchsafe so much as not to enter into judgement with him. Lord, saith he, if thou enterest into judgement with me, I die, because I shall be condemned; for in thy sight I cannot be justified; to wit, by my own good deeds. Lord, and

the beginning of thy dealing with me, by the law and my works, I die: therefore do not so much as enter into judgement with me O Lord. Nor is this my case only, but it is the condition of all the world: *For in thy sight shall no man living be justified.*

(3.) A third instance is that general conclusion of the apostle, *But that no man is justified by the law in the sight of God, is evident; for the just shall live by faith.* By this saying of St Paul, as he taketh up this sentence of the prophet Habakkuk, chap. 2. 4. so he taketh up this sentence, yea, and the personal justice of David also. No man, saith he, is justified by the law in the sight of God: no, no just man, no holy man, not the strictest and most righteous man. But why not? Why, because the just shall live by faith.

The just man, therefore, must die, if he has not faith in another righteousness than that which is of the law, called his own: I say, he must die, if he has none other righteousness than that which is his own by the law. Thus also Paul confesses of himself: I saith he, *know nothing by myself*, either before conversion or after; that is, I knew not that I did any thing before conversion, either against the law, or against my conscience; for I was then, touching the righteousness which is of the law, blameless. Also, since my conversion, I know nothing by myself; for *I have walked in all good conscience before God unto this day.*

A great saying, I promise you. Well, but yet *I am not hereby justified*, Phil. 3. 7.; Acts 23. 1.; 1 Cor. 4. 4. Nor will I dare to venture the eternal salvation of my soul upon mine own justice; *for he that judgeth me is the Lord*; that is, though I, through my dimightedness, cannot see the imperfections of my righteousness, yet the Lord, who is my judge, and before whose tribunal, I must shortly stand, can and will; and if in his sight there shall be found no more but one spot in my righteousness, I must, if I plead my righteousness, fall for that.

2. That the best of men are afraid to stand before

God's tribunal, there to be judged by the law as to life and death, according to the sufficiency or non-sufficiency of their righteousness, is evident; because by casting away their own, (in this matter), they make all the means they can for this; that is, that his mercy, by an act of grace, be made over to them, and that they in it may stand before God to be judged.

Hence David cries out so often, *Lead me in thy righteousness. Deliver me in thy righteousness. Judge me according to thy righteousness. Quicken me in thy righteousness.* O Lord, says he, give ear to my supplications: In thy faithfulness answer me, and in thy righteousness. And enter not into judgement with thy servant. O Lord: For in thy sight shall no man living be justified. And David, What if God doth thus? Why then, saith he, *My tongue shall speak of his righteousness. My tongue shall sing of thy righteousness. My mouth shall shew forth thy righteousness. Yea, I will make mention of thy righteousness, even of thine only,* Psal. 58.; & 31. 1.; & 35. 24.; 119. 40.; & 35. 28.; & 51. 14.; & 71. 15, 16.

Daniel also, when he comes to plead for himself and his people, he first casts away his and their righteousness, saying, *For we do not present our supplications unto thee for our righteousness.* And pleads God's righteousness, and that he might have a share and interest in that, saying, *O Lord, righteousness belongeth to thee; to wit, that righteousness, for the sake of which, mercy and forgiveness, and so heaven and happiness, is extended to us.*

Righteousness belongeth to thee, and is thine, as nearly as sin, shame, and confusion, is ours, and belongeth to us. Read the 16th and 17th verses of the 9th of Daniel. O Lord, saith he, according to all thy righteousness, I beseech thee, let thine anger, and thy fury, be turned away from thy city Jerusalem, thy holy mountain; because for our sins, and for the iniquities of our fathers, Jerusalem, and thy people, are become a reproach to all that are about us. Now therefore, O our God, hear the prayer of thy servant, and his supplication, and cause thy face to shine upon thy

thy sanctuary that is desolate, for the Lord's sake: For the sake of the Lord Jesus Christ; for on him Daniel now had his eye, and through him to the Father he made his supplication: yea, and the answer was according to his prayer, to wit, That God would have mercy on Jerusalem; and that he would in his time send the Lord, the Messias, to bring them in everlasting righteousness for them.

Paul also, as I have hinted before, disclaims his own righteousness, and layeth fast hold on the righteousness of God; seeking to be found in that, not having his own righteousness, for he knew that when the rain descends, the winds blow, and the floods come down on all men, but they have that righteousness, they must fall, Phil. 3.

Now, the earnest desire of the righteous to be found in God's righteousness, ariseth from strong conviction of the imperfections of their own, and the knowledge that was given them of the terror that will attend men at the day of the fiery trial; to wit, the day of judgement. For although men can now flatter themselves into a fool's paradise, and persuade themselves that all shall be well with them then, for the sake of their own silly and vain-glorious performances, yet when the day comes that shall burn like an oven, and when all that have done wickedly shall be as stubble, (and so will all appear to be that are not found in Christ), then will their righteousness vanish like smoke, or be like fuel for that burning flame. And hence the righteousness that the godly seek to be found in, is called *the name of the Lord, a strong tower, a rock, a shield, a fortress, a buckler, a rock of defence*, unto which they resort, and into which they run and are safe.

The godly therefore do not, as this Pharisee, bring their own righteousness into the temple, and there buoy up themselves and spirits by that into a conceit, that for the sake of that God will be merciful and good unto them; But throwing away their own, they make to God for his, because they certainly know, even by the word of God, that in the judgement

none can stand the trial but those that are found in the righteousness of God.

3. That the best of men are afraid to stand before God's tribunal by the law, there to be judged to life and death, according to the sufficiency or non-sufficiency of their righteousness, is evident; for they know, that it is a vain thing to seek, by acts of righteousness, to make themselves righteous men, as is the way of all them that seek to be justified by the deeds of the law.

And herein lieth the great difference between the Pharisee and the true Christian man. The Pharisee thinks, by acts of righteousness he shall make himself a righteous man: therefore he cometh into the presence of God well furnished, as he thinks, with his negative and positive righteousness.

Grace suffereth not a man to boast before God whatever he saith before men. His soul that is lifted up, is not upright in him; and better is the poor in spirit, than the proud in spirit. The Pharisee was a very proud man; a proud, ignorant man; proud of his own righteousness, and ignorant of God's: For had he not, he could not, as he did, have so condemned the Publican, and justified himself.

And I say again, that all this pride and vain-glorious shew of the Pharisee did arise from his not being acquainted with this, that a man must be good before he can do good; he must be righteous, before he can do righteousness. This is evident from Paul, who insinuateth this as the reason *why none do good*, even because *there is none that is righteous, no, not one. There is none righteous*, saith he, and then follows, *There is none that doth good*, Rom. 3. 10, 11. For it is not possible for a man that is not first made righteous by the God of heaven, to do any thing that in a gospel-sense may be called righteousness. To make himself a righteous man, by his so meddling with them, he may design; but work righteousness, and so by such works of righteousness make himself a righteous man, he cannot.

The righteousness of a carnal man is indeed by God called

called righteousness; but it must be understood as spoken in the dialect of the world. The world indeed calls it righteousness, and it will do no harm, if it bears that term with reference to worldly matters. Hence worldly civilians are called good and righteous men, and so, such as Christ, under that notion, neither died for, nor giveth his grace unto, Rom. 5. 7, 8 But we are not now discoursing about any other righteousness, than that which is so accounted either in a law or in a gospel-sense; and therefore let us a little more touch upon that.

A man then must be righteous in a law-sense, before he can do acts of righteousness, I mean, that are such in a gospel-sense. Hence, first, you have true gospel-righteousness made the fruit of a second birth. *If ye know that Christ is righteous, know ye, that every one that doth righteousness is born of him,* 1 John 2. 29. Not born of him by virtue of his own righteous actions, but born of him by virtue of Christ's mighty working with his work upon the soul, who afterwards, from a principle of life, acteth and worketh righteousness.

And he saith again, *Little children, let no man deceive you: he that doth righteousness is righteous, even as he is righteous.* Upon this scripture I will a little comment, for the proof of what is urged before: namely, that a man must be righteous in a law-sense, before he can do such things that may be called acts of righteousness in a gospel-sense. And for this, this scripture, 1 John 3. 7. ministereth to us two things to be considered by us.

The first is, That he that doth righteousness is righteous.

The second is, That he that doth righteousness is righteous, as Christ is righteous.

First, He that doth righteousness; that is, righteousness which the gospel calleth so, is righteous; that is, precedent to, before he doth that righteousness. For he doth not say, he shall make his person righteous by acts of righteousness that he shall do; for then an evil tree may bear good fruit, yea, and may

may make itself good by doing so; but he saith, He that doth righteousness is righteous; as he saith, He that doth righteousness is born of him.

So then, a man must be righteous before he can do righteousness, before he can do righteousness in a gospel-sense.

Our second thing then is to inquire, with what righteousness a man must be righteous, before he can do that which in a gospel-sense is called righteousness.

And, first, I answer, He must be righteous in a law-sense: that is, he must be righteous in the judgement of the law. This is evident; because he saith, He that doth righteousness is righteous, as he is righteous. That is, in a law-sense; for Christ in no sense is righteous in the judgement of charity only; but in his meanest acts, if it be lawful to make such comparison, he was righteous in a law-sense, or in the judgement of the law. Now the apostle saith, *That he that doth righteousness is righteous, as he is righteous.* They are the words of God, and therefore I cannot err in quoting of them, though I may not so fully as I would make the glory of them shine in speaking to them.

But what righteousness is that, with which a man must stand righteous in the judgement of the law, before he shall or can be found to do acts of righteousness, that by the gospel are so called?

I answer, first, It is none of his own which is of the law, you may be sure; for he hath his righteousness before he doth and that can be called his own. *He that doth righteousness is righteous already, precedent to, or before he doth that righteousness; yea, he is righteous, even as he is righteous.*

2. It cannot be his own which is of the gospel; that is, that which floweth from a principle of grace in the soul: for he is righteous before he doth this righteousness. He that doth righteousness is righteous. He doth not say, he that hath done it, but he that doth it; respecting the act while it is in doing, he is righteous. He is righteous even then when he is a doing of the very first act of righteousness; but

an act, while it is in doing, cannot, until it is done, be called an act of righteousness; yet, saith the text, *he is righteous.*

But again, if an act, while it is in doing, cannot be called an act of righteousness, to be sure, it cannot have such influences as to make the actor righteous; to make him righteous, as the Son of God is righteous; and yet the righteousness with which this doer is made righteous, and that before he doth righteousness, is such; for so saith the text, that makes him righteous, as he is righteous.

Besides, it cannot be his own, which is gospel-righteousness, flowing from a principle of grace in the soul for that in its greatest perfection in us, while we live in this world, is accompanied with some imperfections; to wit, our faith, love, and whole course of holiness is wanting, or hath something lacking in it. They neither are apart, nor when put all together, perfect, as to the degree, the uttermost degree of perfection.

But the righteousness under consideration, with which the man, in that of John, is made righteous, is a perfect righteousness; not only with respect to the nature of it, as a penny is as perfect silver as a shilling; nor yet with respect to a comparative degree for so a shilling arriveth more toward the perfection of the number twenty, than doth a twopenny or a threepenny piece; but it is a righteousness so perfect, that nothing can be added to, nor can any thing be taken from it, for so implieth the words of the text, *he is righteous as Christ is righteous*; yea, thus righteous before, and in order to his doing of righteousness. And in this he is like unto the Son of God, who was also righteous before he did acts of righteousness referring to a law of commandment; wherefore it is said, that as he is, so are we in this world. As he is or was righteous, before he did acts of righteousness among men by a law, so are his righteous, before they act righteousness among men by a law. *He that doth righteousness is righteous, as he is righteous.*

Christ

Christ was righteous before he did righteousness, with a twofold righteousness. He had a righteousness as he was God; his godhead was perfectly righteous: yea, it was righteousness itself. His human nature was perfectly righteous, it was naturally spotless and undefiled. Thus his person was righteous, and so qualified to do that righteousness, that because he was born of woman, and made under the law, he was bound by the law to perform.

Now, as he is, so are we; not by way of natural righteousness, but by way of resemblance thereunto. Had Christ, in order to his working of righteousness, a twofold righteousness inherent in himself? The Christian, in order to his working of righteousness, had belonging to him a twofold righteousness. Did Christ's twofold righteousness qualify him for that work of righteousness that was of God designed for him to do? Why, the Christian's twofold righteousness doth qualify him for that work of righteousness that God hath ordained, that he should do, and walk in this world.

But you may ask, What is that righteousness with which a Christian is made righteous before he doth righteousness?

I answer, It is a twofold righteousness.

1. It is a righteousness put upon him.
2. It is a righteousness put into him.

For the first, It is righteousness put upon him, with which also he is clothed as with a coat or mantle, Rom. 3. 22. and this is called *the robe of righteousness*; and this is called *the garment of salvation*, Isa. 61. 10. This righteousness is none other but the obedience of Christ; the which he performed in the days of his flesh, and can properly be called no man's righteousness, but the righteousness of Christ; because no man had a hand therein, but he completed it himself. And hence it is said, *That by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous*, Rom. 5. 19. By the obedience of one, of one man Jesus Christ, (as you have it in verse 15.); for he came down into the world, to this very end; that is,

make a generation righteous, not by making of them laws, and prescribing unto them rules: (for this was the work of Moses, who said, *And it shall be our righteousness, if we observe to do all the commandments before the Lord our God, as he hath commanded us*, Deut 6. 25. : chap. 24. 13.); nor yet by taking away by his grace the imperfections of their righteousness, and so making of that perfect by additions of his own; but he makes them righteous by his obedience; not in them, but for them, while he personally subjected himself to his Father's law on our behalf; that he might have a righteousness to bestow upon us. And hence we are said to be made righteous, while we work not; and to be justified, while ungodly, (Rom. 4. 5.), which can be done by no other righteousness than that which is the righteousness of Christ by performance, the righteousness of God by donation, and our righteousness by imputation. For, I say, the person that wrought this righteousness for us, is Jesus Christ; the person that giveth it to us, is the Father; who hath made Christ to be unto us righteousness, and hath given him to us for this very end, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him, 1 Cor. 1. 40. 2 Cor. 5. 21. And hence it is often said, *One shall say, surely in the Lord have I righteousness and strength*. And again, *In the Lord shall all the seed of Israel be justified, and shall glory. This is the heritage of the servants of the Lord, and their righteousness is of me*, saith the Lord, Isa. 45. 24, 25.; chap. 54. 17.

This righteousness is that which justifieth, and which secureth the soul from the curse of the law; by hiding, through its perfection, all the sins and imperfections of the soul. Hence it follows, *Even as David also describeth the blessedness of the man, unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works, saying, Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered. Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin*, Rom. 4.

And this it doth, even while the person, that by grace is made a partaker, is without good works, and

so ungodly. This is the righteousness of Christ, Christ's personal performances, which he did when he was in this world; that is, that by which the soul, while naked, is covered, and so hid as to its nakedness, from the divine sentence of the law: *I spread my skirt over thee, and covered thy nakedness*, Ezek. 16. 4,—9.

Now this obediential righteousness of Christ, consisteth of two parts. 1. In a doing of that which the law commanded us to do. 2. In a paying that price for the transgression thereof, which justice hath said shall be required at the hand of man; and that is the cursed death. *In the day that thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die the death*; to wit, the death that comes by the curse of the law. So then, Christ having brought in that part of obedience for us, which consisteth in a doing of such obediential acts of righteousness which the law commands, he adds thereto the spilling of his blood, to be the price of our redemption from that cursed death, that by sin we had brought upon our bodies and souls. And thus are the Christians perfectly righteous; they have the whole obedience of Christ made over to them; to wit, that obedience that standeth in doing the law, and that obedience that standeth in paying of a price for our transgressions. So then, Doth the law call for righteousness? Here it is. Doth the law call for satisfaction for our sins? Here it is. And what can the law say any more to the sinner but that which is good, when he findeth in the personal obedience of Christ for him, that which answereth to what it can command, that which it can demand of us?

Herein then standeth a Christian's safety, not in a bundle of actions of his own, but in a righteousness which cometh to him by grace and gift; for this righteousness is such as comes by gift, by the gift of God. Hence it is called the gift of righteousness, the gift by grace, the gift of righteousness by grace, which is the righteousness of one, to wit, the obedience of Jesus Christ, Rom. 5. 15,—19.

And this is the righteousness by which, he that

doth righteousness, is righteous as he is righteous; because it is the very self-same righteousness that the Son of God hath accomplished by himself. Nor has he any other or more excellent righteousness, of which the law taketh notice, or that it requireth, than this: for as for the righteousness of his godhead, the law is not concerned with that; for as he is such, the law is his creature, and servant, and may not meddle with him.

The righteousness also of his human nature, the law hath nothing to do with that; for that is the workmanship of God, and is as good, as pure, as holy, and undefiled, as is the law itself. All then that the law hath to do with, is to exact complete obedience of him that is made under it, and a due satisfaction for the breach thereof, the which, if it hath, then Moses is content.

Now, this is the righteousness, with which the Christian, as to justification, is made righteous; to wit, a righteousness, that is neither essential to his godhead, nor to his manhood; but such as standeth in that glorious person (who was such) his obedience to the law. Which righteousness himself had, with reference to himself, no need of at all, for his godhead, yea, his manhood, was perfectly righteous without it. This righteousness therefore was there, and there only necessary, where Christ was considered as God's servant (and our surety) to bring to God Jacob again, and to restore the preserved of Israel. For though Christ was a Son, yet he became a servant to do, not for himself, for he had no need, but for us, the whole law, and so bring in everlasting righteousness for us.

And hence it is said, that Christ did what he did for us: He became the end of the law for righteousness for us; he suffered for us, he died for us, he laid down his life for us, and he gave himself for us. The righteousness then that Christ did fulfil, when he was in the world, was not for himself simply considered, nor for himself personally considered, for

he had no need thereof; but it was for the elect, the members of his body.

Christ then did not fulfil the law for himself, for he had no need thereof. Christ again did fulfil the law for himself, for he had need of the righteousness thereof; he had need thereof for the covering of his body, and the several members thereof; for they, in a good sense, are himself, members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones; and he owns them as parts of himself in many places of the holy scripture, Eph. 5. 30.; Acts 9. 4, 5.; Matth. 25. 45.; & 10. 40.; Mark 9. 37.; Luke 10. 16.; 1 Cor. 12. 12, 27. This righteousness then, even the whole of what Christ did in answer to the law, it was for his, and God hath put it upon them, and they were righteous in it, even righteous as he is righteous. And this they have before they do acts of righteousness.

Secondly, There is righteousness put into them, before they act righteous things. A righteousness, I say, put into them; or I had rather that you should call it a principle of righteousness; for it is a principle of life to righteousness. Before man's conversion, there is in him a principle of death to sin; but when he is converted to Christ, there is put in him a principle of righteousness, that he may bring forth fruit unto God, Rom. 7. 4, 5. 6.

Hence they are said to be quickened, to be made alive, to be risen from death to life, to have the Spirit of God dwelling in them; not only to make their souls alive, but to quicken their mortal bodies to that which is good, Rom. 8. 11.

Here, as I hinted before; they that do righteousness are said to be born of him, that is, antecedent to their doing of righteousness, 1 John 2. 29. *born of him*, that is, made alive with new spiritual and heavenly life. Wherefore the exhortation to them is, *Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin; but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God,* Rom. 6. 13.

Now

Now this principal must also be in men, before they can do that which is spiritual: for whatever seeming good thing any man doth, before he has bestowed upon him this heavenly principle from God, it is accounted nothing, it is accounted sin and abomination in the sight of God; for an evil tree cannot bring forth good fruit: *Men do not gather grapes of thorns; neither of a bramble gather figs.* It is not the fruit that makes the tree, but the tree that makes the fruit. A man must be good, before he can do good; and evil before he can do evil.

This is that which is asserted by the Son of God himself; and it lieth so level with reason and the nature of things, that it cannot be contradicted, Matth. 7. 16, 17, 18.; Luke 6. 43, 44, 45. *A good man, out of the good treasure of his heart, bringeth forth that which is good: and an evil man, out of the evil treasure of his heart, bringeth forth that which is evil.* But notwithstanding all that can be said, it seemeth very strange to the carnal world; for they will not be otherwise persuaded, but that they be good deeds that make good men, and evil ones that make evil men: And so, by such dotish apprehensions, do what in them lieth to fortify their hearts with the mists of darkness against the clear shining of the word, and conviction of the truth.

And thus it was from the beginning: Abel's first services to God were from this principle of righteousness; but Cain would have been made righteous by his deeds; but his deeds not flowing from the same root of goodness, as did Abel's, notwithstanding he did it with the very best he had, is yet called evil: for he wanted, I say, the principles, to wit, of grace and faith, without which no action can be counted good in a gospel-sense.

These two things, then, that man must have that will do righteousness. He must have put upon him the perfect righteousness of Christ: and he must have that dwelling in him, as a fruit of the new birth, a principle of righteousness. Then indeed he is a tree of righteousness, and God is like to be glorified in, and

and by him; but this the Pharisee was utterly ignorant of, and at the remotest distance from.

You may ask me next, But which of these are first bestowed upon the Christian, the perfect righteousness of Christ unto justification, or this gospel-principle of righteousness unto sanctification?

Ans. The perfect righteousness of Christ unto justification, must first be made over to him by an act of grace. This is evident,

1. Because he is justified as ungodly; that is, whilst he is ungodly: but it must not be said of them, that have this principle of grace in them, that they are ungodly; for they are saints and holy. But this righteousness, by it God justifieth the ungodly, by imputing it to them, when, and while they, as to a principle of grace, are graceless.

This is further manifested thus: The person must be accepted before his performance can; *And God had respect unto Abel, and to his offering*, Gen. 4. If he had respect to Abel's person first, yet he must have respect unto it for the sake of some righteousness; but Abel, as yet had no righteousness; for that he acted, after God had a respect unto his person. *And God had respect unto Abel, and to his offering; but unto Cain, and to his offering, the Lord had no respect.*

The prophet Ezekiel also shews us this? where, by the similitude of the wretched infant, and of the manner of God's receiving it to mercy, he shews, how he received the Jews to favour. First, saith he, *I spread my skirt over thee, and covered thy nakedness.* There is justification; *I covered thy nakedness*: But what manner of nakedness was it? Yes, it was then as naked as naked could be, even as naked as in the day that it was born, Ezek. 16. 4,—9. And as thus naked, it was covered, not with any thing but with the skirt of Christ; that is, with his robe of righteousness, with his obedience, that he performed of himself for that very purpose; for by the obedience of one, many are made righteous.

2. Righteousness unto justification must be first, because the first duty that a Christian performeth to God,

God, must be accepted, not for the sake of the principle from which in the heart it flows, nor yet for the sake of the person that acts it, but for the sake of Christ, whose righteousness it is by which the sinner stands just before God. And hence it is said, *By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain*, Heb. 11. By faith he did it; but faith in respect to the righteousness that justifies; for we are justified by faith, not by faith as it is an acting grace, but the righteousness of faith, that is, by that righteousness that faith embraceth, layeth hold of, and helpeth the soul to rest, and trust to, for justification of life, which is the obedience of Christ. Besides, it is said, by faith he offered; faith then in Christ was precedent to his offering.

Now, since faith was in act before his offer, and since before his offer he had no personal goodness of his own, faith must look out from home; I say to another for righteousness; and finding the righteousness of Christ to be the righteousness which by God was designed to be performed for the justification of a sinner, it embraces it, and through it offereth to God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain.

Hence it follows, by which he obtained witness, that he was righteous; by which, not by his offering, but by his faith; for his offering, simply as an offering, could not have made him righteous if he had not been righteous before; *for an evil tree cannot bring forth good fruit*. Besides, if this be granted, why had not God respect to Cain's offering, as well as to Abel's? For did Abel offer? So did Cain. Did Abel offer his best? So did Cain his. And if with this we shall take notice of the order of their offering, Cain seemed to offer first, and so with the frankest will and forwardest mind; but yet, faith the text, *The Lord had respect to Abel and to his offering*. But why to Abel? Why, because his person was made righteous before he offered his gift: *By which he obtained witness that he was righteous*; God testifying of his gifts, that they were good and acceptable, because they declared Abel's acceptance of the righteousness

ousness of Christ, through the riches of the grace of God.

By faith, then, Abel offered to God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain. He shrouded himself under the righteousness of Christ, and so, of that righteousness, he offered to God. God also looking and finding him there, (where he could not have been, as to his own apprehension, no otherwise than by faith), accepted of his gift; by which acceptation (for so you may understand it also) God testifieth that he was righteous; for God receiveth not the gifts and offerings of those that are not righteous, for their sacrifices are an abomination unto him, Prov. 21. 27.

Abel then was, I say, made righteous, first, as he stood ungodly in himself; God justifieth the ungodly, Rom. 4. Now being justified, he was righteous; and being righteous, he offered his sacrifice of praise to God, or other offerings which God accepted, because he believed in his Son. But this our Pharisee understandeth not.

3. Righteousness by an imputation must be first, because we are made so, to wit, by another, *By the obedience of one shall many be made righteous*. Now to be made righteous, implies a passiveness in him that is so made, and the activity of the work to lie in some body else; except he had said, they had made themselves righteous; but that it doth not, nor doth the text leave to any the least countenance so to insinuate; nay, it plainly affirms the contrary, for it saith, *by the obedience of one, of one man, Jesus Christ, many are made righteous*; by the righteousness of one, Rom. 5.: So then, if they be made righteous by the righteousness of one; I say, if many be made righteous by the righteousness of one, then are they that are so, as to themselves, passive and not active, with reference unto the working out of this righteousness. They have no hand in that; for that is the act of one, the righteousness of one, the obedience of one, the workmanship of one, even of Christ Jesus.

Again, If they are made righteous by this righteousness, then also they are passive as to their first privilege

village by it; for they are made righteous by it; they do not make themselves righteous by it.

Imputation is also the act of God. *Even as David also describeth the blessedness of the man, unto whom God imputeth righteousness.* The righteousness then is a work of Christ, his own obedience to his Father's law; the making of it ours is the act of the Father, and of his infinite grace: *For of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom and righteousness.* For (God) bath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him. And both these things God shewed to our first parents, when he acted in grace towards them after the fall.

There it is said, the Lord God made unto Adam, and unto his wife, coats of skins, and clothed them, Gen. 3. 21.

(1.) That Adam and his wife were naked both in God's eye, and in their own, ver. 10, 11.

(2.) That the Lord God made coats of skins.

(3.) That in his making of them, he had respect to Adam and to his wife, that is, he made them.

(4.) That when he had made them, he also clothed them therewith.

They made not the coats, nor did God bid them make them; but God did make them himself to cover their nakedness with. Yes, when he had made them, he did not bid them put them on, but he himself did clothe them with them: For thus runs the text; *Unto Adam also, and to his wife, did the Lord God make coats of skins, and clothed them.* O! it was the Lord God that made this coat with which a poor sinner is made righteous! And it is also the Lord God that putteth it upon us. But this our Pharisee understandeth not.

But now, if a man is not righteous before he is made so, before the Lord God has by the righteousness of another made him so; then whether this righteousness comes first or last, the man is not righteous until it cometh; and if he be not righteous until it cometh, then what works soever are done be-

fore it comes, they are not the works of a righteous man, nor the fruits of a good tree, but of a bad. And so again, this righteousness must first come before a man be righteous, and before a man does righteousness. Make the tree good, and its fruit will be good.

Now, since a man must be made righteous before he can do righteousness, it is manifest his works of righteousness does not make him righteous, no more than the fig makes its own tree a fig-tree, or than the grape doth make its own vine a vine. Hence those acts of righteousness that Christian men do perform, are called the fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ to the glory and praise of God, Phil. 1. 11.

The fruits of righteousness they are by Jesus Christ as the fruits of the tree are by the tree itself; for the truth is, that principle of righteousness, of which mention has been made before, and concerning which I have said it comes in, in the second place; it is also originally to be found for us no where but in Christ.

Hence it is said to be by Jesus Christ; and again, *of his fulness have we all received, and grace for grace*, John 1. 16. A man must then be united to Christ first, and so being united, he partaketh of this benefit, to wit, a principle that is supernatural, spiritual, and heavenly. Now his being united to Christ, is not of or from himself, but of and from the Father, who, as to this work, is the husbandman; even as the twig that is grafted into the tree officiateth not, that is, grafteth not itself thereunto, but is grafted in by some other, itself being utterly passive as to that. Now being united unto Christ, the soul is first made partaker of justification, or of justifying righteousness, and now no longer beareth the name of an ungodly man; for he is made righteous by the obedience of Christ, he being also united to Christ, partaketh of the root and fatness of Christ; the root, that is, his divine nature; the fatness, that is, the fulness of grace that is laid up in him to be communicated unto us, even as the branch that is grafted into the olive-tree,

tree, partaketh of the root and fatness of the olive-tree. Now partaking thereof, it quickeneth, it groweth, it buddeth, and yieldeth fruit to the praise and glory of God, Rom. 11. 17.

But these things, as I have often said, the poor Pharisee was ignorant of, when so swaggeringly he, with his, *God, I thank thee*, came into the temple to pray; And indeed, in that which hath been said, is something of the mystery of God's will in his way with his elect; and such a mystery it is, that it lieth hid for ever to nature and natural men; for they think of nothing less than of this, nor of nothing more, when they think of their souls and of salvation, than that something must be done by themselves to reconcile them to God. Yea, if through some common convictions their understandings should be swayed to a consenting to that, that justification is of grace by Christ, and not of works by men; yet conscience, reason, and the law of nature, not being as yet subdued by the power and glory of grace unto the obedience of Christ, will rise up in rebellion against this doctrine, and will over-rule and bow down the soul again to the law, and works thereof, for life.

4. Righteousness by imputation must be first, because, else faith, which is a part, yea, a greater part of that which is called a principle of grace in the the soul, will have nothing to fix itself upon, nor a motive to work by. Let this therefore be considered by these that are on the contrary side.

Faith, so soon as it has a being in the soul, is like the child that has a being in the mother's lap; it must have something to feed upon, not something at a distance, afar off, to be purchased, (I speak now as to justification from the curse), but something by promise made over of grace to the soul, something to feed upon to support from the fears of perishing by the curse for sin. Nor can it rest content with all duties and performances that other graces shall put the soul upon; nor with any of its own works, until it reaches and takes hold of the righteousness of Christ. Faith is like the dove, found no rest any

where until it returned to Noah into the ark. But this our Pharisee understandeth not.

Perhaps some may object, That from this way of reasoning it is apparent, that sanctification is first, since the soul may have faith, and so a principle of grace in it; and yet, as yet it cannot find Christ to feed and refresh the soul withal.

Ans. From this way of reasoning it is not at all apparent that sanctification, or a principle of grace, is in the soul, before righteousness is imputed and the soul made perfectly righteous thereby. And for the clearing up of this, let me propose a few things.

Justifying righteousness, to wit, the obedience of that one man Christ, is imputed to the sinner, to justify him in God's sight; for his law calls for perfect righteousness, and before that be come to, and put upon the poor sinner, God cannot bestow other spiritual blessings upon him; because by the law he has pronounced him accursed; by the which curse he is also so holden, until a righteousness shall be found upon the sinner, that the law and divine justice can approve of, and be contented with. So then, as to the justification of the sinner, there must be a righteousness for God; I say, for the sinner, and for God: for the sinner to be clothed with, and for God to look upon, that he may, for the sake thereof, in a way of justice, bless the sinner with forgiveness of sins: For forgiveness of sins is the next thing that followeth upon the appearance of the sinner before God in the righteousness of Christ, Rom. 4. 6, 7.

Now, upon this forgiveness follows the second blessing. Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us; and so, consequently, hath obtained for us the forgiveness of sins: for he that is delivered from the curse, hath received forgiveness of sins, or rather is made partaker thereof. Now, being made a partaker thereof, the second blessing immediately follows, to wit, the blessing of Abraham, that is, the promise of the Spirit through faith, Gal. 3. 13, 14. But this our Pharisee understandeth not.

But

But now, although it be of absolute necessity that imputed righteousness be first, to the soul; that is, that perfect righteousness be found upon the sinner first by God, that he may bestow other blessings in a way of justice.

Let God then put the righteousness of his Son upon me; and by virtue of that let the second blessing of God come into me; and by virtue of that, let me be made to see myself a sinner, and Christ's righteousness, and my need of it, in the doctrine of it, as it is revealed in the scriptures of truth. Let me then believe this doctrine to be true, and be brought by my belief to repentance for my sins, to hungering and thirsting vehemently after this righteousness: for this is the kingdom of God, and his righteousness. Yea, let me pray, and cry, and sigh, and groan, day and night, to the God of this righteousness, that he will of grace make me a partaker. And let me thus prostrate before my God, all the time that in wisdom he shall think fit; and in his own time he shall shew me, that I am a justified person, a pardoned person, a person in whom the Spirit of God hath dwelt for some time, though I knew it not.

So then, justification before God is one thing, and justification in mine own eyes is another: Not that these are two justifications, but the same righteousness by which I stand justified before God, may be seen of God, when I am ignorant of it: yea, for the sake of it I may be received, pardoned, and accounted righteous of him, and yet I may not understand it. Yea, further, he may proceed in the way of blessing to bless me with additional blessings, and yet I be ignorant of it.

So that the question is not, Do I find that I am righteous? but, Am I so? Doth God find me so, when he seeth that the righteousness of his Son is upon me, being made over to me by an act of his grace? For I am justified freely by his grace, through the redemption which is in Jesus Christ, whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the redemption of sins that

that are past, through the forbearance of God, Rom. 3. 24. But this our Pharisee understandeth not.

I am then made righteous first by the righteousness of another; and because I am righteous, God accepteth of my person as such, and bestoweth upon me his grace; the which, at first, for want of skill and experience in the word of righteousness, I make use of but poorly, and have need to be certified that I am made righteous, and that I have eternal life; not by faith first and immediately, but by the written word, which is called *the word of faith*; which word declareth unto me, (to whom grace, and so faith in the seed of it, is given), that I have eternal life, and that I should with boldness, in peace and joy, believe on the Son of God, Heb. 5. 13.; Rom. 15. 13.; 1 John 5. 13. But,

Again, I, in the first acts of my faith, when I come at Christ, do not accept of him, because I know I am righteous, either with imputed righteousness, or with that which is inherent. Both these, as to my present privilege in them, may be hidden from mine eyes, and I only put upon taking of encouragement to close with Christ for life and righteousness, as he is set forth to be a propitiation before mine eyes, in the word of the truth of the gospel; to which word I adhere as, or because I find, I want peace with God in my soul, and because I am convinced, that the means of peace is not to be found any where but in Jesus Christ. Now, by my thus adhering to him, I find stay for my soul, and peace to my conscience, because the word doth ascertain to me, that he that believeth on him hath remission of sins, hath eternal life, and shall be saved from the wrath to come.

But, alas! who knows (the many straits, and as I may say, the stress of weather, I mean) the cold blasts of hell, with which the poor soul is assaulted, betwixt its receiving of grace, and its sensible closing with Jesus Christ? None, I dare say, but it and its fellows. *The heart knows its own bitterness, and a stranger intermeddleth not with his joy*, Prov. 14. 10.

No

No sooner doth Satan perceive what God is doing with the soul, in a way of grace and mercy, but he endeavoureth what he may, to make the renewing thereof bitter and wearisome work to the sinner. O what mists, what mountains, what clouds, what darkness, what objections, what false apprehensions of God, of Christ, of grace, of the word, and of the soul's condition, doth he now lay before it, and haunt it with; whereby he dejecteth, casteth down, daunteth, distresseth, and almost driveth it quite into despair! Now, by the reason of these things, faith (and all the grace that is in the soul) is hard put to it to come at the promise; and by the promise of Christ, as it is said, when the tempest and great danger of shipwreck lay upon the vessel in which Paul was, *They had much work to come by the boat*, Acts 27. 16. For Satan's design is, if he cannot keep the soul from Christ, to make his coming to him, and closing with him, as hard, as difficult, and troublesome, as he by his devices can. But faith, true justifying faith, is a grace, is not weary by all that Satan can do; but meditateth upon the word, and taketh stomach, and courage, fighteth and crieth, and by crying and fighting, by help from heaven, its way is made through all the oppositions that appear so mighty, and draweth up at last to Jesus Christ, into whose bosom it putteth the soul, where, for the time, it sweetly resteth, after its marvellous tossings to and fro.

And besides what hath been said, let me yet illustrate this truth unto you by this familiar similitude.

Suppose a man, a traitor, that by the law should die for his sin, is yet such an one, that the king hath exceeding kindness for; may not the king pardon this man of his clemency; yea, order that his pardon should be drawn up and sealed, and so in every sense be made sure; and yet, for the present, keep all this close enough from the ears, or the knowledge of the person therein concerned? Yea, may not the king after all leave this person, with others under the same transgression, to sue for and obtain this pardon with

with great expence and difficulty, with many tears and heart-akings, with many fears, and dubious cogitations?

Why, this is the cause between God and the soul that he saveth; he saveth him, pardoneth him, and secureth him from the curse and death that is due unto sin, but yet doth not tell him so, but ascends in his great suit unto God for it. Only this difference we must make between God and the potentates of this world; God cannot pardon before the sinner stands before him, righteous by the righteousness of Christ; because he has in judgement, and justice, and righteousness, threatened and concluded, that he that wants righteousness shall die.

And I say again, because this righteousness is God's and at God's disposal only; it is God that must make a man righteous before he can forgive him his sins, or bestow upon him of his secondary blessings; to wit, his Spirit, and the graces thereof. And I say again, it must be this righteousness; for it can be no other that justifies a sinner from sin in the sight of God, and from the sentence of the law.

Secondly, This is, and must be the way of God with the sinner, that faith may not only have an object to work upon, but a motive to work by.

1st, Here, as I said, faith hath an object to work upon, and that in the person of Christ, and that personal righteousness of his, which he in the days of his flesh did finish to justify sinners withal. This is, I say, the object of faith for justification, whereunto the soul by it doth continually resort. Hence David saith to Christ, *Be thou my strong habitation*; or as you have it in the margin, *Be thou to me a rock of habitation, whereunto I may continually resort*, Psal. 71. 3. And two things he infers by so saying.

The first is, That the Christian is a man under continual exercises, sometimes one way, and sometimes another; but all his exercises have a tendency in them more or less to spoil him; therefore he is rather for flying to Christ, than for grappling with them in and by his own power.

The second is, that Christ is of God, our shelter as to this very thing. Hence his name is said to be a strong tower, and that the righteous run into it, and are safe, Prov 18. 10. That also of David in the sixty-first psalm, is very pregnant to this purpose; *Mine enemies, saith he, would daily swallow me up, for they be many that fight against me, O thou Most High.* And what then? Why, saith he, *I will trust in thee.* Thus you see, faith hath an object to work upon to carry the soul unto, and to secure the soul in times of difficulty, and that object is Jesus Christ and his righteousness. But,

2dly, Again, as faith hath an object to work upon, so it hath a motive to work by; and that is the love of God in giving of Christ to the soul for righteousness. Nor is there any profession, religion, or duty and performance, that is at all regarded, where this faith, which by such means can work, is wanting. *For in Jesus Christ, neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision, but faith which worketh by love;* So Gal. 5. 6. acteth lovely, or by faith, whose fruit is love, (though true faith hath love for its offspring), but faith which worketh by love; that is true, saving, justifying faith, as it beholdeth the righteousness of Christ, as made over to the soul for justification; so it beholdeth love, love to be the cause of its so being made over. It beholdeth love in the Father, in giving of his Son, and love in the Son, in giving of himself to be made soul-saving righteousness for me. And seeing it worketh by it, that is, it is stirred up to an holy boldness of venturing all eternal concerns upon Christ, and also to an holy, endeared, affecting love of him, for his sweet and blessed redeeming love. Hence the apostle saith, *The love of Christ constraineth us that we thus judge, that if one died for all, then are all dead; and that he died for all, that they that live, should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him that died for them and rose again,* 2 Cor. 5. 14.

Thus then is the heart united in affection and love to the Father and the Son, for the love that they

have shewed to the poor sinner, in their thus delivering him from the wrath to come. For by this love faith worketh, in sweet passions and pangs of love, to all that are thus reconciled, as this sinner seeth he is. The motive then, whereby faith worketh, both as to justification and sanctification, the great motive to them, I say, is love, the love of God, and the love of Christ: *We love him, because he first loved us.* That is, when our faith hath told us so; for so are the words above, *We have known and believed the love that God hath to us.* And then, *We love him because he first loved us.* And then, *This commandment have we from him, that he that loveth God, loveth his brother also,* 1 John 4. 16,—22. But this our poor Pharisee understandeth not. But,

5. Righteousness by imputation must be first, to cut off boasting from the heart, conceit, and lips of men. Wherefore he saith, as before, *That we are justified freely by the grace of God,* not through, or for the sake of an holy gospel-principle in us; but *through the redemption that is in Jesus Christ, &c.* Where is boasting then? It is excluded. By what law? Of works? Nay, but by the law of faith. And this is the law of faith, that we are justified as before, Rom. 3. 27, 28.

Nor can any man propound such an essential way to cut off boasting as this, which is of God's providing: For what has man here to boast of? No righteousness, nor yet of the application of it to his soul. The righteousness is Christ's, not the sinner's. The imputation is God's, not the sinner's. The cause of imputation is God's grace and love, not the sinner's works of righteousness. The time of God's imputing righteousness, is when the sinner was a sinner, wrapped up in ignorance, and wallowing in his vanity; not when he was good, or when he was seeking of it; for his inward gospel-goodness is a fruit of the imputation of justifying righteousness. Where is boasting then? Where is our Pharisee then, with his brags of not being as other men are? It is excluded, and he with it, and the poor Publican taken into fa-
your,

your, that boasting might be cut off. *Not of works, lest any man should boast.* There is no trust to be put in men; those that seem most humble, and that to appearance, and farthest off from pride, it is natural to them to boast; yea, now they have no cause to boast; for by grace are we saved through faith, and that not of ourselves, it is the gift of God. *Not of works, lest any man should boast.*

But if man is so prone to boast, when yet there is no ground of boasting in him, nor yet in what he doth, how would he have boasted, had he been permitted by the God of heaven to have done something, though that something had been but a very little something towards his justification? But God has prevented boasting, by doing as he has done, Eph. 2. 8, 9. Nay, the apostle addeth further, (lest any man should boast), that as to good works, *we are God's workmanship; created unto Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained, that we should walk in them,* ver. 10. Can the tree boast, since it was God that made it such? Where is boasting then? *But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption; that according as it is written, he that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord,* 1 Cor. 1. 30, 31. Where is boasting then? Where is our Pharisee then, with all his works of righteousness, and with his boasts of being better than his neighbours?

It may be said, If we should be justified for the sake of our inherent righteousness, since that righteousness is the gift of God, will it not follow, that boasting is in the occasion thereof cut off?

Ans. No; for although the principle of inherent righteousness be the gift of God, yet it bringeth forth fruits by man, and through man; and so man having a hand therein, though he should have never so little, he has an occasion offered him to boast. Yea, if a man should be justified before God by the grace, or the working of the grace of faith in him, he would have ground of occasion to boast, because
3 P 2 faith,

faith, though it be the gift of God, yet as it acteth in man, takes man along with it in its so acting; yea, the acting of faith is as often attributed to the man by whom it is acted, and oftener, than to the grace itself. How then can it be, but that man must have a hand therein, and so a ground therein, or thereof to boast?

But now, since justification from the curse of the law before God, lieth only and wholly in God's imputing of Christ's righteousness to a man, and that too, while the man to whom it is imputed, is in himself wicked and ungodly, there is no room left for boasting before God, for that is the boasting intended; but rather an occasion given to shame and confusion of face, and to stop the mouth for ever, since justification comes in a way so far above him, so vastly without him, his skill, help, or what else soever, Ezek. 16. 61, 62, 63.

6. Righteousness by imputation must be first, *that justification may not be of debt, but mercy and grace.* This is evident from reason: It is meet that God should therefore justify us by a righteousness of his own, not of his own prescribing; for that he may do, and yet the righteousness be ours; but of his own providing, that the righteousness may be his. *Now to him that worketh, is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt,* Rom. 4. 2, 3, 4. If I work for justifying righteousness, and that way get righteousness, my justification is not of grace, but of debt. God giveth it not unto me, but he oweth it unto me; so then it is no longer his, but mine: Mine, not of grace, but debt. And if so, then I thank him not for his remission of sins, nor for the kingdom of heaven, nor for eternal life; for if justifying righteousness is of debt, then when I have it, and what dependeth thereon, I have but mine own; that which God oweth to me.

Nor will it help at all to say, But I obtain it by God's grace in me, because that doth not cut off my works, nor prevent my having of an hand in my justifying righteousness.

Suppose

Suppose I give a man materials, even all materials that are necessary to the completing of such or such a thing; yet if he worketh, though the materials be mine, I am to him a debtor, and he deserveth a reward. Thou sayst, God has given thee his Spirit, his grace, and all other things that are necessary for the working up of a complete righteousness. Well, but is thy work required to the finishing of this righteousness? If so, this is not the righteousness that justifieth; because it is such as has thy hand, thy workmanship therein, and so obtains a reward. And observe it, righteousness, justifying righteousness, consisteth not in a principle of righteousness, but in works of righteousness; that is, in good duties, in obedience, in a walking in the law to the pleasing of the law, and the content of the justice of God.

I suppose again, that thou shalt conclude with me, that justifying righteousness, I mean that which justifies from the curse of the law, resideth only in the obedience of the Son of God; and that the principle of grace that is in thee, is none of that righteousness, no, not then when thou hast to the utmost walked with God according to thy gift and grace; yet if thou concludest, that this principle must be in thee, and these works done by thee, before this justifying righteousness is imputed to thee for justification, thou layest in a *caveat* against justification by grace; and also concludest, that though thou art not justified by thy righteousness, but by Christ, yet thou art justified by Christ's righteousness, for the sake of thine own, and so makest justification to be still a debt. But here the scripture doth also cut thee off: *Not for thy righteousness, or for the righteousness of thine heart, dost thou possess the land, (which was but a type of heaven); and if our righteousness cannot give us, by its excellency, a share in the type, be sure, that for it, we shall never be sharers in the anti-type itself. Understand therefore, that the Lord thy God giveth thee not this good land to possess it, for thy righteousness; for thou art a stiff-necked people,* Deut. 9. 5, 6.

Gospel.

Gospel-performances, therefore, are not first; that was first, for the sake of which God did receive these people into favour with himself, and that was a covenant-righteousness; and where could that covenant-righteousness be found, but in the Prince, Mediator, and High Priest of the covenant? For it was he, and he only, that was appointed of God, nor could any but himself bring in everlasting righteousness, Dan. 9. 24, 25. This is evident from these texts last mentioned; it was not for their righteousness that they possessed the land.

Again, As it was not for their righteousness that they were made possessors of the land, so it was not for the sake of their righteousness that they were made partakers of such a righteousness that did make them possess the land. This is plain to reason; for personal righteousness, when by us performed, is of no worth to obtain of God a justifying righteousness. But if it be of no worth to obtain a justifying righteousness, then, it seems, it is more commodious to both parties than justifying righteousness. First, it is more commodious to him that worketh it; and, secondly, it is more commodious unto him that receiveth it, else why doth he for it give us a due debt, and so put upon us the everlasting justifying righteousness?

Perhaps it will be objected, That God doth all this of grace; but I answer, That these are but fallacious words, spoke by the tongue of the crafty. For we are not now discoursing of what rewards God can give to the operations of his own grace in us, but whether he can in a way of justice (or how he will) bestow any spiritual blessing upon sinful creatures, against whom, for sin, he has pronounced the curse of the law, before he hath found them in a righteousness, that is proved to be as good justice and righteousness, as is the justice and righteousness of the law, with whom we have to do.

I assert he cannot, because he cannot lie, because he cannot deny himself: for if he should first threaten the transgression of the law with death, and yet afterwards

terwards receive the transgressor to grace, without a plenary satisfaction, what is this but to lie, and to diminish his truth, righteousness, and faithfulness; yea, and also to overthrow the sanction and perfect holiness of his law? His mercy, therefore, must act so towards this sinner, that justice may be satisfied, and that can never be, without a justifying righteousness.

Now what this justifying righteousness should be, and when imputed, that is the question. I say, it is the righteousness, or the obedience of the Son of God in the flesh, which he assumed, and so his own, and the righteousness of no body else otherwise than by imputation.

I say again, that this righteousness must be imputed first, that the sinner may stand just in God's sight from the curse, that God might deal with him both in a way of justice as well as mercy, and yet do the sinner no harm.

But you may ask, How did God deal with sinners before his righteousness was actually in being?

I answer, He did then deal with sinners even as he dealeth with them now; he justified them by it, by virtue of the suretyship of him that was to bring it in. Christ became surety for us, and by his suretyship laid himself under an obligation for those for whom he became a surety, to bring in this everlasting and justifying righteousness, and by virtue of this those of his elect, that came into and went out of the world, before he came to perform his work, were saved through the forbearance of God. Wherefore, before the Lord came, they were saved for the Lord's sake, and for the sake of his name. And they that were spiritually wise understood it, and pleaded it as their necessities required, and the Lord accepted them, Heb. 7. 22.; Rom. 4. 24.; Dan 9. 17.; Psal. 25. 11.

7. Righteousness by imputation must be first, *that justification may be certain; therefore it is of faith,* (of the righteousness that faith layeth hold on), *that it might be by grace, to the end the promise might be free to all the seed,* Rom. 4. 16. That the promise,

What

What promise? The promise of remission of sins, &c. might be sure.

Now a promise of remission of sins supposeth a righteousness going before; for there is no forgiveness of sins, nor promise of forgiveness, not for the sake of righteousness that shall be by us, but that already found in Christ as head, and so imputed to the elect for their remission. *God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you*, Eph. 4. 32.; & 5. 1. For Christ's sake; that is, for the sake of the righteousness of Christ. Imputed righteousness must be first; yea, it must be before forgiveness, and forgiveness is extended by God then when we lie in our blood, though to us it is manifested afterwards. Therefore it is of faith, he saith not by it, respecting the act of faith; but of, respecting the doctrine or word which presenteth me with this blessed imputed righteousness: they that are of faith, are the children of faithful Abraham. They that are of the doctrine of faith, for all the elect are the sons of that doctrine in which is this righteousness of Christ contained; yea, they are begotten by it of God to this inheritance, to their comfortable enjoyment of the comfort of it by faith.

That the promise might be sure to all the seed, to all them wrapped up in the promise, and so begotten and born. That it might be sure, implying that there is no certain way of salvation for the elect, but this; because God can never by other means reconcile us to himself, for his heavenly eyes perceive, yea, they spy faults in the best of our gospel-performances; yea, our faith is faulty, and also imperfect; how then should remission be extended to us for the sake of that? But now the righteousness of Christ is perfect, perpetual and stable as the great mountains; wherefore he is called the rock of our salvation, because a man may as soon tumble the mountains before him, as sin can make invalid the righteousness of Christ, when, and unto whom, God shall impute it for justice, Psal. 36. In the margin it is said to be like the mountain of God; to wit, called Mount Zion, or that Moriah in which the temple was built, and upon which

which it stood: All other bottoms are fickle, all other righteousnesses are so feeble, short, narrow, yea, so full of imperfections; for what the law could not do in that it was weak through the flesh, Christ did for us in the similitude of sinful flesh. But what could not the law do? Why, it could not give us righteousness, nor strengthen us to perform it. It could not give us any certain, solid, well-grounded hope of remission of sin and salvation.

Wherefore this righteousness-being imputed, justice findeth no fault therewith, but consenteth to the extending to the sinner those blessings that tend to perfect his happiness in the heavens.

8. Righteousness by imputation must be first, *that in all things Christ may have the preheminance*. Christ is head of the church, and therefore let him have the highest honour in the soul; but how can he have that, if any precede as to justification, before his perfect righteousness be imputed? If it be said, grace may be in the soul, though the soul doth not act it, until the moment that justifying righteousness shall be imputed.

I ask, What should it do there before, or to what purpose is it there, if it be not acted? And again, how came it thither, how got the soul possession of it, while it was unjustified? or, How could God in justice give it to a person, that by the law stood condemned, before they were quitted from that condemnation? And I say, nothing can set the soul free from that curse, but the perfect obedience of Christ; nor that either, if it be not imputed for that end to the sinner by the grace of God.

Imputed, that is, reckoned or accounted to him. And why should it not be accounted to him for righteousness? What did Christ bring it into the world for? for the righteous or for sinners? No doubt for sinners. And how must it be reckoned to them? Not in circumcision, but in uncircumcision; not as righteous, but as sinners. And how are they to consider of themselves, even then when they first are apprehensive of their need of this righteousness? Are they to think that they are righteous, or sinners?

And again, How are they to believe concerning themselves, then when they put forth the first act of faith towards this righteousness for justification? Are they to think, that they are righteous, or sinners? Sinners, doubtless, they are to reckon themselves, and as such to reckon themselves justified by this righteousness. And this is according to the sentence of God, as appeareth by such sayings.

For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly.

But God commended his love towards us, in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us.

For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, &c. Rom. 5.

Out of these words I gather these three things.

(1.) That Christ by God's appointment died for us.

(2.) That by his death he reconciled us to God.

(3.) That even, then, when the very act of reconciliation was in performing, and also when performed we were ungodly, sinners, enemies.

Now, the act by which we are said to be reconciled to God, while ungodly, while sinners, and while enemies, was Christ's offering himself a sacrifice for us, which is, in the words above mentioned, called his death, Christ died for the ungodly; Christ died for us while sinners; Christ reconciled us to God by his death. And as Christ is said to die for us, so the Father is said to impute righteousness to us; to wit, as we are without works, as we are ungodly. *Now to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness.* He worketh not, but is ungodly, when this gracious act of God, in imputing the righteousness of Christ to him, is extended; when he shall believe, his faith is counted to him for righteousness. And why should we not have the benefit of the righteousness, since it was completed for us while we were yet ungodly? Yea, we have the benefit of it: *For when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son.*

When

When I say, the benefit, I mean that benefit that we are capable of, and that is justification before God; for that a man may be capable of while he is in himself ungodly, because this comes to him by the righteousness of another. True, was it to be his own righteousness by which he was to be justified, he could not: but the righteousness is Christ's, and that imputed by God, not as a reward for work, or of debt, but freely by his grace; and therefore may be, and is so, while the person concerned is without works, ungodly, and a sinner.

And he that denieth that we are capable of this benefit while we are sinners and ungodly, may with the like reason deny that we are created beings: For that which is done for a man without him, may be done for him at any time which they that do it shall appoint. While a man is a beggar, may not I make him worth ten thousand a-year, if I can and will: and yet he may not know thereof in that moment that I make him so? yet the revenue of that estate shall really be his from the moment that I make him so, and he shall know it too at the rent-day.

This is the case: We are sinners and ungodly; there is a righteousness wrought out by Jesus Christ, which God hath designed we shall be made righteous by; and by it, if he will impute it to us, we shall be righteous in his sight; even then when we are yet ungodly in ourselves: for he justifies the ungodly.

Now, tho' it is irregular and blameworthy in man to justify the wicked, because he cannot provide and clothe him with a justifying righteousness, yet it is glorious, and for ever worthy of praise, for God to do it: because it is in his power, not only to forgive but to make a man righteous, even then when he is a sinner, and to justify him, while he is ungodly.

But it may be yet objected, That though God has received satisfaction for sin, and so sufficient terms of reconciliation by the obedience and death of his Son, yet he imputeth it not unto us, but upon condition of our becoming good.

Ans. This must not be admitted: For,

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1. The scripture saith not so; but that we are reconciled to God, by the death of his Son, and justified too, and that while or when we are sinners and ungodly.

2. If this objection carrieth truth in it, then it follows, that the Holy Ghost, saith, and so all grace, may be given to us, and we may have it dwelling in us, yea, acting in us, before we stand righteous in the judgement of the law before God, (for nothing can make us stand just before God in the judgement of the law, but the obedience of the Son of God without us). And if the Holy Ghost, saith, and so consequently the habit of every grace, may be in us acting in us, before Christ's righteousness be by God imputed to us, then we are not justified as sinners and ungodly, but as persons inherently holy and righteous before.

But I have shewed you, that this cannot be, therefore righteousness for justification must be imputed first. And here let me present the reader with two or three things.

1. That justification before God is one thing, and justification to the understanding and conscience is another. Now, I am treating of justification before God, not of it as to man's understanding and conscience: And I say, a man may be justified before God, even then when himself knoweth nothing thereof Isa. 40. 2.; Mark. 9. 2.; and while he hath not faith about it, but is ungodly.

2. There is justification by faith, by faith's applying of that righteousness to the understanding and conscience, which God hath of his grace imputed for righteousness to the soul for justification in his sight. And this is that which we, as to sense and feeling, have peace with God: *Being justified by faith we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, Rom. 5. 1.* And these two the apostle keepeth distinct in the 10th verse: *That while we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son. He addeth, And not only so, but we joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received*

ed the atonement, ver. 11. Here you see, that to be reconciled to God by the death of his Son, is one thing, and for us actually to receive by faith this reconciliation, is another: And not only so, but we have received the atonement.

3. Men do not gather their justification from God's single act of imputing of righteousness, that we might stand clear in his sight from the curse and judgement of the law; but from the word of God, which they understand not, till it is brought to their understanding by the light and glory of the Holy Ghost.

We are not therefore in the ministry of the word to pronounce any man justified, from a supposition that God has imputed righteousness to him, (since that acts is not known to us), until the fruits that follow thereupon do break out before our eyes, to wit, the signs and effects of the Holy Ghost indwelling in our souls. And then we may conclude it, that is, that such a one stands justified before God, yet not for the sake of his inherent righteousness, nor yet for the fruits thereof, and so not for the sake of the act of faith, but for the sake of Jesus Christ his doing and suffering for us.

Nor will it avail to object, That if at first we stand justified before God by his imputing of Christ's righteousness unto us, though faith be not in us to act, we may always stand justified so; and so what need of faith? for therefore are we justified, first, by the imputation of God, as we are ungodly, that thereby we may be made capable of receiving of the Holy Ghost, and his graces in a way of righteousness and justice. Besides, God will have those that he shall justify by his grace through the redemption that is in Jesus Christ, to have the Holy Ghost, and so faith that they may know and believe the things not only that shall be, but that already are, freely given to us of God. Now, says Paul, *we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is of God, that we may know the things that are freely given to us of God, 1 Cor. 2. 12.* To know, that is,
to

to believe: It is given to you to believe, who believe according to the working of his mighty power; and we have known and believed the love that God hath to us, preceding to our believing, John 4. 16. He then that is justified by God's imputation, shall believe by the power of the Holy Ghost; for that must come, and work faith, and strengthen the soul to act it, because imputed righteousness has gone before. He then that believeth shall be saved; for his believing is a sign, not a cause, of his being made righteous before God by imputation; and he that believeth not shall be damned.

And thus much for the Pharisee, and for his information. And now I come to that part of the text which remains, which respecteth the Publican.

And the Publican standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes to heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner.

What this Publican was, I have shewed you, both with respect to nation, office, and disposition. Wherefore I shall not here trouble the reader as to that. We now therefore come to his repentance in the whole and in the parts of it: concerning which I shall take notice of several things, some more remote, and some more near to the matter and life of it.

But, first, let us see how cross the Pharisee and the Publican did lie in the temple one to another, while they both were presenting of their prayers to God.

1. The Pharisee he goes in boldly, fears nothing, but trusteth in himself that his state is good, that God loves him, and that there was no doubt to be made but of his good speed in this his religious enterprise. But, alas! poor Publican, he sneaks, crawls into the temple, and when he comes there, stands behind, aloof, off, as one not worthy to approach the divine presence.

2. The Pharisee at his approach hath his mouth full of many fine things, whereby he stroaks himself over the head, and in effect calls himself one of God's white boys, that always kept close to his will, abode with

with him, or, as the prodigal's brother said, *Lo, these many years do I serve thee, neither transgressed I at any time thy commandment*, Luke 15. 29. But alas! poor Publican, thy guilt, as to pleas, stops thy mouth thou hast not one good thing to say of thyself, not one rag of righteousness; thy conscience tells thee so; yea, and if thou shouldst now attempt to set a good face on it, and for thy credit say something after the Pharisee in way of thine own commendations, yet here is God on the one side, the Pharisee on the other, together with thine own heart to give thee a check, to rebuke thee, to condemn thee, and to lay thee even to the ground for thy insolence.

3. The Pharisee in his approach to God, wipes his fingers of the Publican's enormities, will not come nigh him, lest he should defile himself with his beastly rags: *I am not as other men are, nor yet as this Publican.* But the poor Publican, alas for him! his fingers are not clean, nor can he tell how to make them so; besides, he meekly and quietly puts up this reflection of the Pharisee upon him, and by silent behaviour justifies the severe sentence of that self-righteous man, concluding with him, that for his part he is wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked, and not worthy to come nigh, or to stand by, so good, so virtuous, so holy, and so deserving a man as our sparkling Pharisee is.

4. The Pharisee, as at feasts and synagogues, chose the chief and first place for his person, and for his prayer, counting that the Publican was not meet, ought not to presume to let his stinking breath once come out of his polluted lips in the temple, till he had made his holy prayer. And, poor Publican, how dost thou hear and put up this with all other affronts, counting even as the Pharisee counted of thee, that thou wast but a dog in comparison of him, and therefore not fit to go before, but to come as in chains, behind, and forbear to present thy mournful supplication to the holy God, till he had presented his, in his own conceit, brave, gay, and fine oration?

5. The Pharisee, as he is numerous in his repeating

ing his good deeds, so is stiff in standing to them, bearing up himself, that he hath now sufficient foundation on which to bear up his soul against all the attempts of the law, the devil, sin, and hell. But, alas, poor Publican! thou standest naked, nay, worse than naked; for thou art clothed with filthy garments, thy sins cover thy face with shame: Nor hast thou in, or of thyself, any defence from, or shelter against the attempts, assaults, and censures of thy ghostly enemies, but are now in thine own eyes (though in the temple) cast forth into the open field stark naked, to the loathing of thy person, as in the day that thou wast born, and there ready to be devoured and torn in pieces for thy transgressions against thy God.

What wilt thou do, Publican? What wilt thou do? Come, let us see, which way wilt thou begin to address thyself to God? Bethink thyself: hast thou any thing to say? speak out man: the Pharisee by this time has done, and received his sentence: make an O yes; let all the world be silent; yea, let the angels of heaven draw near and listen; for the Publican is come to have to do with God! yea, is come from the receipt of custom into the temple to pray to him.

And the Publican standing afar off, would not lift up so much as eyes to heaven; but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner. And is this thy way, poor Publican! O cunning sinner! O crafty Publican! thy wisdom has outdone the Pharisee; for it is better to apply ourselves to God's mercy, than to trust to ourselves that we are righteous. But that the Publican did hit the mark, yea, get nearer unto, and more in the heart of God and his Son than the Pharisee, the sequel will make manifest.

Take notice then of this profound speech of the Publican, *God be merciful to me a sinner.* Yea, the Son of God was so delighted with this prayer, that for the sake of it, he, even as a limner, draweth out the Publican in his manner of standing, behaviour, gestures, &c. while he makes this prayer to God: wherefore

wherefore we will take notice both of the one and of the other; for surely his gestures put lustre into his prayer and repentance.

1. His prayer you see is this, *God be merciful to me a sinner.*

His gestures in his prayer were in general three.

1. He stood *afar off*.

2. He would not lift up so much as his eyes to heaven.

3. He *smote upon his breast*, with his fist, saying, *God be merciful to me a sinner.*

To begin first with his prayer. In this prayer we have two things to consider of.

1. His confession: *I am a sinner.*

2. His imploring of help against this malady: *God be merciful to me a sinner.*

In his confession divers things are to be taken notice of. As,

1. The fairness and simplicity of his confession: *A sinner: I am a sinner; God be merciful to me a sinner.* This indeed he was, and this indeed confesses; and this, I say, he doth of godly simplicity. For a man to confess himself a sinner, it is to speak all against himself that can be spoken. And man, as degenerate, is too much an hypocrite, and too much a self-flatterer, thus to confess against himself, unless made simple and honest through the power of conviction upon his heart. And it is worth your noting, that he doth not say he was, or had been, but that at time his state was such, to wit, a sinner. *God be merciful to me a sinner*, or who am, and now stand before thee a sinner, in my sins.

Now a little to shew you what it is to be a sinner; for every one that sinneth may not in a proper sense be called a sinner. Saints, the sanctified in Christ Jesus, do often sin, but it is not proper to call them sinners: but here the Publican calls himself a sinner; and therefore in effect calls himself an evil tree, one that beareth no good fruit; one whose body and soul is polluted, whose mind and conscience is defiled; one who hath walked according to the course of this

world, and after the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience; they having their minds at enmity against God, and are taken captive by the devil at his will; a sinner, one whose trade hath been in sin, and the works of Satan all his days.

Thus he waves all pleas, and stoops his neck immediately to the block. Though he was a base man, yet he might have had pleas; pleas, I say, as well as the Pharisee, though not so many, yet as good. He was of the stock of Abraham, a Jew, an Israelite of the Israelites, and so a priviledged man in the religion of the Jews, else what doth he do in the temple? Yea, why did not the Pharisee, if he was a Heathen, lay that to his charge while he stood before God? But the truth is, he could not; for the Publican was a Jew as well as the Pharisee, and consequently might, had he been so disposed, have pleaded that before God. But he would not, he could not, for his conscience was under convictions, the awakenings of God were upon him; wherefore his privileges melt away like grease, and fly from him like the chaff of the summer threshing-floor, which the wind talketh up and scattereth as the dust; he therefore lets all privileges fall, and pleads only that he is a sinner.

2. In this confession he judges and condemn himself: For a man to say, *I am a sinner*, is as much as to say, I am contrary to the holiness of God, a transgressor of the law, and consequently an object of the curse, and an heir of hell. The Publican therefore goeth very far in this his confession; For in the

3d place, To confess, that there is nothing in him, done, or can be done by him, that should allure, or prevail with God to do any thing for him: For a sinner cannot do good; no, nor work up his heart unto one good thought: No, though he should have heaven itself if he could, or was sure to burn in hell-fire for ever and ever if he could not. For sin, where it is in possession, and bears rule, as it doth in every one that we may properly call a sinner, there it hath the mastery of the man, hath bound up his senses in cords
and

and chains, and made nothing so odious to the soul as the things that are of the Spirit of God. Wherefore it is said of such, that they are *enemies in their minds*; that the carnal mind is enmity to God, and that wickedness proceedeth of the wicked: and that the Ethiopian may as well change his skin, or the leopard his spots, as they that are accustomed to do evil, may learn to do well, Eph. 2.; Rom. 8.; 1 Sam. 34. 24.; Jer. 13. 23.

4. In this confession, he implicitly acknowledgeth, that sin is the worst of things, forasmuch as it layeth the soul out of the reach of all remedy that can be found under heaven. Nothing below, or short of the mercy of God, can deliver a poor soul from this fearful malady. This the Pharisee did not see. Doubtless he did conclude, that at some time or other he had sinned; but he never in all his life did arrive to a sight of what sin was: his knowledge of it was but false and counterfeit, as is manifest by his cure; to wit, his own righteousness. For take this for a truth undeniable, that he that thinks himself better before God, because of his reformatations, never yet had the true knowledge of his sin: But the poor Publican he had it, he had in truth, as is manifest, because it drives him to the only sovereign remedy. For indeed, the right knowledge of sin, in the filth and guilt, and damning power thereof, makes a man to understand, that not any thing but grace and mercy by Christ, can secure him from the hellish ruins thereof.

Suppose a man sick of an apoplexy unto death, and should for his remedy make use only of these things that are good against the second ague, would not this demonstrate that this man was not sensible of the nature and danger of this disease? The same may be said of every sinner, that shall make use only of those means to justify him before God, that can hardly make him go for a good Christian before judicious men. But the poor Publican, he knew the nature and the danger of his disease; and knew also, that nothing but mercy, infinite mercy, could cure him thereof.

5. This confession of the Publican, declareth that he himself was borne up now, by an almighty, though invisible hand. For sin, when seen in its colours, and when appearing in its monstrous shape, frighteth all away from God. This is manifest by Cain, Judas, Saul, and others, who could not stand up before God under the sense and appearance of their sin, but fly before him, one to one fruit of despair, and one to another. But now this Publican, though he apprehends his sin, that himself was one that was a sinner, yet he beareth up, cometh into the temple, approaches the presence of an holy and sin-revenging God, stands before him, and confesses that he is that man that sin had defiled, and that had brought him into the danger of damnation thereby.

This therefore was a mighty act of the Publican: He went against the voice of conscience, against sense and feeling, against the curse and condemning verdict of the law: he went, as I may say, upon hot burning coals to one, that to sin and sinners is a consuming fire.

Now then, did the Publican this of his own head, or from his own mind? No verily; there was some supernatural power within that did secretly prompt him on, and strengthen him to this more noble venture. True, there is nothing more common among wicked men, than to tick and toy, and play with this saying of the Publican, *God be merciful to me a sinner*; not at all being sensible either what sin is, or of their need of mercy. And such sinners shall find there speed in the Publican's prayer, far otherwise than the Publican sped himself; it will happen unto them much as it happened unto the vagabond Jews, exorcists, who took upon them to call over them that had evil spirits, the name of the Lord Jesus; that were beaten by that spirit, and made fly out of that house naked and wounded, Acts 19. 13. Poor sinner, thou wilt say the Publican's prayer, and make the Publican's confession, and say, *God be merciful to me a sinner*. But hold; dost thou do it with the

Publican's

Publican's heart, sense, dread, and simplicity? If not, thou dost but abuse the Publican and his prayer, and thyself, and his God; and shalt find God rejecting of thee and thy prayers, saying, The Publican I know; his prayers and godly tears I know; but who or what art thou? And will send thee away naked. They are the hungry that he filleth with good things, but the rich (and the senseless) he sendeth empty away.

For my part, I find it one of the hardest things that I can put my soul upon, even to come to God, when warmly sensible that I am a sinner, for a share in grace and mercy. Oh! methinks it seems to me as if the whole face of the heavens were set against me. Yea, the very thought of God strikes me through; I cannot bear up, I cannot stand before him; I cannot but with a thousand tears say, *God be merciful to me a sinner*, Ezra 9. 15.

At another time, when my heart is more hard and stupid, and when his terror doth not make me afraid, then I can come before him, and ask mercy at his hand, and scarce be sensible of sin or grace, or that indeed I am before God. But above all, they are the rare times, when I can go to God as the Publican, sensible of his glorious majesty, sensible of my misery, and bear up, and affectionately cry, *God be merciful to me a sinner*.

But again, the Publican, by his confession, sheweth a piece of the highest wisdom that a mortal man can shew; because, by so doing, he engageth as well as imploreth the grace and mercy of God to save him. You see by the text he imploreth it; and now I will shew you that he engageth it, and makes himself a sharer in it.

He that hideth his sins shall not prosper; but he that confesseth and forsaketh them, shall find mercy. And again, *If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness*, Prov. 28. 13.; 1 John 1. 9.

First, In the promise of pardon, *he shall find mercy*; he shall have his sins forgiven. As also Solomon prays,

prays, that God will forgive them *that know their own sores*; and they are indeed such as are sensible of *the plague of their own heart*, 2 Chron. 6. 29, 30. 1 Kings 8. 37, 38. And the reason is, because the sinner is now driven to the farthest point; for confession is the farthest point, and the utmost bound unto which God has appointed the Publican to go, with reference to his work. As it is said of Saul to David, when he was about to give him Mical his daughter to wife, *I desire not any dowry, but an hundred foreskins of the Philistines, to be avenged of the king's enemies.*

So says God in this matter, *I desire no sacrifices, nor legal righteousness to make thee acceptable to me: only acknowledge and confess thine iniquity, that thou hast transgressed against me*, 1 Sam. 18. 25; Jer. 3. 12, 13. And though this by some may be thought to be a very easy way to come at, and partake of the mercy of God; yet let the sensible sinner try it, and he shall find it one of the hardest things in the world. And there are two things, to which man is prone, that makes confession hard.

First, There is a great incidency in us to be partial, and not thorough and plain in our confessions. We are apt to make half confessions; to confess some, and hide some; or else to make feigned confessions, flattering both ourselves, and also God, while we make confession unto him; or else to confess sin, as our own fancies apprehend, and not as the word describes them. These things we are very incident to: Men can confess little sins, while they hide great ones. Men can feign themselves sorry for sin when they are not, or else in their confessions forget to judge of sin by the word, Hence it is said, *They turned to God, not with their whole hearts, but as it were feignedly*, They spake not aright, saying, *What have I done?* They flatter him with their lips, and lie unto him with their tongues, and do their wickedness in the dark, and sin against him with a high hand, and then come to him and cover the altar with their tears. These things therefore demonstrate the difficulty of

sincere

sincere confession of sin; and that to do it as it should, is no such easy thing.

To right confession of sin, several things must go; As,

1. There must be sound conviction for sin upon the spirit: For before a man shall be convinced of the nature, aggravation, and evil of sin, how shall he make godly confession of it? Now, to convince the soul of sin, the law must be set home upon the conscience by the Spirit of God: *For by the law is the knowledge of sin.* And again, *I had not known sin unless the law had said, Thou shalt not covet, Rom.*

3. 7. This law, now when it effectually ministereth conviction of sin to the conscience, doth it by putting of life, and strength, and terror into sin. By its working on the conscience, it makes sin revive, *and the strength of sin is the law, Rom. 7.; 1 Cor. 15.* It also increaseth and multiplieth sin, both by the revelation of God's anger against the soul, and also by mustering up and calling to view sins committed and forgotten time out of mind. Sin seen in the glass of the law is a terrible thing; no man can behold it and live. When the commandment came, sin revived, and I died; when it came from God to my conscience, as managed by an almighty arm, then it slew me. And now is the time to confess sin, because now a soul knows what it is, and sees what it is, both in the nature and consequence of it.

2. To a right confession of sin, there must be sound knowledge of God, especially as to his justice, holiness, righteousness, and purity; wherefore the Publican here begins his confession by calling upon, or by the acknowledgement of his Majesty: *God be merciful to me a sinner:* As if he should say, God, O God, O great God, O sin-revenging God, I have sinned against thee, I have broken thy law, I have opposed thy holiness, thy justice, thy law, and thy righteous will. O consuming fire, (for our God is a consuming fire), I have justly provoked thee to wrath, and to take vengeance of me for my transgressions. But alas! how few that make confession of sin have right apprehension

apprehension of God, unto whom confession of sin doth belong. Alas! it is easy for men to entertain such apprehensions of God as shall please their own humours, to bear up under the sense of sin, and that shall make their confession rather facile and fantastical, than solid and heart-breaking. The sight and knowledge of the great God is, to sinful man, the most dreadful thing in the world; which makes confession of sin so rare. Most men confess their sins behind God's back, but few to his face; and you know there is oft-times a vast difference in thus doing among men.

3. To the right confession of sin, there must be a deep conviction of the terribleness of the day of judgement. This John the Baptist inserts, where he insinuates, that the Pharisees want of (sense of, and) the true confession of sin, was because they had not been warned (or had not taken the alarm) to flee from the wrath to come. What dread, terror, or frightful apprehension can there be, where there is no sense of a day of judgement, and of our giving unto God an account for it? Matth. 3. 7.; Luke 3. 7.

I say, therefore, to confession of sin, there must be,

(1.) A deep conviction of the certainty of the day of judgement; namely, that such a day is coming, that such a day shall be. This the apostle insinuates, where he saith, *God commands all men, every where, to repent, because he hath appointed a day in which he will judge the world in righteousness, by that man whom he hath ordained, whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead, Acts 17. 30, 31.*

This will give a sense of what the soul must expect at that day for sin, and so will drive to an hearty acknowledgment of it, and strong cries for a deliverance from it. For thus will the soul argue that expecteth the judgement-day, and that believes that he must count for all. O my heart! it is in vain now to dissemble, or to hide, or to lessen transgressions; for there is a judgement to come, a day in which God will judge the secrets of men by his Son; and at that day he will bring to light the hidden things

of darkness, and will manifest the counsels of the heart. If it must be so then, to what end will it be now to seek to dissemble? 1 Cor. 4. 5. This also is in the Old Testament urged as an argument to cause youth, and persons of all sizes, to recal themselves to sobriety, and so to confession of their sin to God; where the Holy Ghost saith ironically, *Rejoice, O young man, in thy youth, and let thine heart cheer thee in the days of thy youth, and walk in the ways of thine heart, and in the sight of thine eyes; but know that for all these things God will bring thee to judgement.* So again, *God will bring every work to judgement, with every secret thing, whether good, or whether evil,* Eccles 11. 9.; and 12. 12, 14.

The certainty of this, I say, must go to the producing of a sincere confession of sin; and this is intimated by the Publican, who, with his confession, addeth, *God be merciful to me a sinner.* As if he should say, If thou art not merciful to me, thy judgement shall swallow me up: without thy mercy I shall not stand, but fall by the judgement which thou hast appointed.

(2.) As there must be, for the producing of sincere confession of sin, a deep conviction of the certainty, so of the terribleness, of the day of judgement: Wherefore the apostle, to put men on repentance, which is sincere confession of sin, saith, *For we must all appear before the judgement-seat of Christ, that every one of us may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad; knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade men,* 2 Cor. 5. 10, 11. The terror of the Lord, as we see here, he makes use of, to persuade men to confession of sin, and repentance to God for mercy.

And I am persuaded, that one reason that this day doth so swarm with wanton professors, is, because they have not sound conviction for, nor go to God with sincere confession of sin: And one cause of that has been, that they did never seriously fall in with, nor yet sink under, either the certainty or terribleness of the day of judgement.

O the terrors of the Lord! the amazing face that will be put upon all things before the tribunal of God! Yea, the terror that will then be read in the face of God, of Christ, of saints and angels, against the ungodly! Whoso believes and understands it, cannot live without confession of sin to God, and a coming to him for mercy.

Mountains, fall upon us, and cover us, and hide us from the face of him that sits upon the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb; for the great day of wrath is come, and who is able to stand? This terror is also signified, where it is said, And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the (very) earth and the heaven fled away, and there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead that were in them: and they were judged every man according to his works. And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire: This is the second death. And whosoever was not found written in the book of life, was cast into the lake of fire, Rev. 20. Here is terror; and this is revealed in the word of God, that sinners might hear and consider it, and so come and confess, and implore God's mercy.

The terror of the Lord, how will it appear, when he shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels in flaming fire, taking vengeance of them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ! 2 Thess. 1. 7, 8, 9.

The terror of the Lord, how will it appear, when his wrath shall burn and flame out like an oven, or a fiery furnace before him, while the wicked stand in his sight! Matth. 13. 50.

The terror of the Lord, how will it appear, while the angels at his command shall gather the wicked to burn

burn them ! *As the tares are gathered and burned in the fire, so shall it be in the end of the world. The Son of Man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather together out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them that do iniquity, and shall cast them into a furnace of fire, where there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth, Matth. 13. 40, 41, 42.* Who can conceive this terror ! much more unable are men to express it with tongue or pen ; yet the truly penitent and sin-confessing Publican, hath apprehension so far thereof, by the word of the testimony, that it driveth him to God, with a confession of sin, for an interest in God's mercy. But,

4. To right and sincere confession of sin, there must be a conviction of a probability of mercy. This also is intimated by the Publican in his confession ; *God (saith he) be merciful to me a sinner.* He had some glimmerings of mercy, some conviction of a probability of mercy, or that he might obtain mercy for his pardon, if he went, and with unfeigned lips did confess his sins to God.

Despair of mercy shuts up the mouth, makes the heart hard, and drives a man away from God ; as is manifest in the case of Adam and the fallen angels. But the least intimation of mercy, if the heart can but touch, feel, taste, or have the least probability of it, that will open the mouth, tend to soften the heart, and to make a very Publican come up to God into the temple, and say, *God be merciful to me a sinner.*

There must then be this holy mixture of things in the heart of a truly confessing Publican. There must be sound sense of sin, sound knowledge of God, deep conviction of the certainty and terribleness of the day of judgement, as also of the probability of obtaining mercy. But to come to that which remains ; I told you that there were two things that did make unfeigned confession hard. The first I have touched upon.

Secondly, And now the second follows : And that is, some private leaning to some goodness a man shall
conceit

conceit that he hath done before, or is doing now, or that he purposeth to prevail with God for the pardon of sins. This man, to be sure, knows not sin in the nature and evil of it, only he has some false apprehensions about it. For where the right knowledge of sin is in the heart, that man sees so much evil in the least transgressions, as that it would break the back of all the angels of heaven, should the great God impute it to them. And he that sees this is far enough off from thinking of doing to mitigate, or assuage the rigour of the law, or to make pardonable his own transgressions thereby. But he that sees not this, cannot confess his transgressions aright; for the confession consisteth in the general, in a man's taking to himself his transgressions, with the acknowledgement of them to be his, and that he cannot stir from under them, nor do any thing to make amends for them, or to palliate the rigour of justice against the soul. And this the Publican did when he cried, *God be merciful to me a sinner.*

He made his sins own he stood before God in them, accounting that he was surely undone for ever, if God did not extend forgiveness unto him. And this is to do as the Prophet Jeremy bids; to wit, only to acknowledge our iniquities, to acknowledge them at the terrible bar of God's justice, until mercy takes them out of the way; not by doing, or promising to either this or that good work. And the reason of this kind of confession is,

1. Because this carrieth in it the true nature of confession; to confess, and abide under the crimes confessed, without shifts and evasions, is the only real simple way of confessions. *I said, I would confess my transgressions to the Lord;* and what then, *and thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin.* Mark, nothing comes in betwixt confession and forgiveness of sin, Psal. 32. 5.; nothing of works of righteousness, nothing of legal amendments, nothing but an outcry for mercy; and that act is so far off from lessening the offence, that it greatly heighteneth and aggravates it. That is the first reason.

2 A second reason is, Because God doth expect that the penitent confessors should not only confess, but bear their shame on them: yea, saith God, *be thou confounded, and bear thine own shame*, when God takes away thine iniquity, *thou shalt be confounded, and never open thy mouth more, because of thy shame*, Ezek. 16. 52, 54, 61, 63. We count it convenient that men, when their crimes and transgressions are to be manifested, that they be set in some open place with a piece paper, wherein their transgressions are inserted, that they may not only confess, but bear their own shame, At the penitential confession of sinners, God has something to do; if not before men yet before angels, that they may behold, and be affected, and rejoice when they shall see, after the revelation of sin, the sinner taken into the favour and abundant-mercy of God, Luke 15.

3. A third reason is, for that God will, in the forgiveness of sin, magnify the riches of his mercy; but this cannot be, if God shall suffer, or accept of such confession of sin, as is yet intermixed with those things that will darken the heinousness of the offence.

That God, in the salvation, and so in the confession of the sinner, designs the magnifying of his mercy, is apparent enough from the whole current of scripture, and that any of the things now mentioned will, if suffered to be done, darken and eclipse this thing, is evident to reason itself.

Suppose a man stand indicted for treason, yet shall so order the matter, that it shall ring in the country, that his offences are but petty crimes; though the king shall forgive this man, much glory shall not thereby redound to the riches and greatness of his mercy. But let all things lie naked, let nothing lie hid or covered, let sin be seen, shewn, and confessed, as it is in the sinner himself, and then there will be in his forgiveness a magnifying of mercy.

4. A fourth reason is, for else God cannot be justified in his sayings, nor overcome when he is judged, Psal. 51.; Rom. 3. God's word hath told us what sin is, both as to its nature and evil effects, God's word hath

hath told us, that the best of our righteousnesses are no better than filthy rags. God's word has also told us, that sin is forgiven us freely by grace, and not for the sake of our amendments: And all this God shews, not only in the acts of his mercy toward, but even in the humiliations and confessions of the penitent; for God will have his mercy to be displayed even there where the sinner hath taken his first step toward him: *That like as sin hath reigned unto death, so grace might reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord, Rom. 5. 21.*

5. A fifth reason is, because God would have by the Publican's conversion others affected with the displays and discoveries of wonderful grace; but not to cloud and cover it with lessening of sin.

For what will such say when sin begins to appear to conscience, and when the law shall follow it with a voice of words. each one like a clap of thunder? I say, what will such say, when they shall read that the Publican did only acknowledge his iniquity, and found grace and favour of God? That God is infinitely merciful to those or to such as in truth stand in need of mercy. Also, that he sheweth mercy of his own good pleasure, nothing moving him thereto.

I say, this is the way to make others be affected with mercy, as he saith, by the Apostle Paul, *But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love where-with he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved), and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus; that in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness to us-ward (or towards us) through Christ Jesus, Eph. 2. 4, 5, 6, 7.* You may also see that 1 Tim. 1. 15, 16.

6. Another reason of this is, because this is the way to heighten the comfort and consolation of the soul, and that both here and hereafter. What tendeth more to this, than for sinners to see, and with guilt and amazement to confess what sin is, and so to have pardon extended from God to the sinner as such?

This

This fills the heart; all ravishes the soul; puts joy into the thoughts of salvation from sin, and deliverance from wrath to come. *Now they return and come to Zion with songs, and everlasting joy upon their heads; they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall fly away, Isa. 35. 10.* Indeed the belief of this makes joy and gladness endless.

7. Besides, it layeth upon the soul the greatest obligations to holiness; what like the apprehension of free forgiveness, (and that apprehension must come in through a sight of the greatness of sin, and of inability to do any thing towards satisfaction), to engage the heart of a rebel to love his prince, and to submit to his laws?

When Elisha had taken the Syrians captives, some were for using severities towards them; but he said, *Set bread and water before them, that they may eat and drink and go to their master; and they did so.* And what follows? *So the bands of Syria came no more into Israel.* He conquered their malice with his compassion. And it is the love of Christ that constraineth to live to him, 2 Kings 6. 13,—23.; 2 Cor. 5. 14.

Many other things might possibly be urged, but at present let these be sufficient.

The second thing that we made mention of in the Publican's prayer, was an imploring of help against this malady: *God be merciful to me a sinner.* In which petition I shall take notice of several things.

First, That a man's help against sin, doth not so absolutely lie in his personal conquest, as in the pardon of them. I suppose a conquest, though here can indeed by man be none, so long as he liveth in this world, I mean, a complete conquest and annihilation of sin.

The Publican, and so every 'graciously awakened sinner, is doubtless for the subduing of sin; but yet he looketh that the chief help against it doth lie in the pardon of it. Suppose a man should stab his neighbour with his knife, and afterwards burn his knife to nothing in the fire, would this give him help against

against his murder? No, verily, notwithstanding this, his neck is obnoxious to the halter, yea, and his soul to hell-fire. But a pardon gives him absolute help: *It is God that justifies, who shall condemn*, Rom. 8. Suppose a man should live many days in rebellion against God, and after that leave off to live any longer so rebelliously, would this help him against the guilt which he had contracted before? No, verily; without remission there is no help, but the rebel is undone. Wherefore the first blessedness, yea, and that without which all other things cannot make one blessed, it lies in pardon. *Blessed is he whose transgressions are forgiven, whose sin is covered. Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin*, Pl. 32.; Rom. 4.

Suppose a man greatly sanctified and made holy; I say, suppose it; yet if the sins before committed by him be not pardoned, he cannot be a blessed man.

Yet again, suppose a man should be caught up to heaven, not having his sins pardoned, heaven itself cannot make him a blessed man. I suppose these things, not that they can be, to illustrate my matter. There can be no blessedness upon any man who yet remaineth unforgiven. You see therefore here, that there was much of the wisdom of the Holy Ghost in this prayer of the Publican. He was directed the right, the only, the next way to shelter, where blessedness begins, even to mercy for the pardon of his sins. Alas! what would it advantage a traitor to be taken up into the king's coach, to be clothed with the king's royal robe, to have put upon his finger the king's gold ring, and to be made to wear, for the present, a chain of gold about his neck, if after all this the king should say unto him, but I will not pardon thy rebellion; thou shalt die for thy treason? Pardon then, to him that loves life, is better, and more to be preferred and sought after, than all other things; yea, it is the highest wisdom in any sinner to seek after that first.

This therefore confuteth the blindness of some, and the hypocrisy of others. Some are so silly and

so blind, as quite to forget and look over the pardon of sin, and to lay their happiness in some external amendments, when, alas ! poor wretches as they are they abide under the wrath of God. Or if they be not quite so foolish as utterly to forget the forgiveness of sin, yet they think of it but in the second place ; they are for setting of sanctification before justification, and so seek to confound the order of God ; and that which is worse unto them, they by so doing do what they can to keep themselves indeed from being sharers in that great blessing of forgiveness of sins by grace.

But the Publican here was guided by the wisdom of heaven ; He comes into the temple, he confesseth himself a sinner, and forthwith, without any delay, before he removeth his foot from where he stands, craves help of pardon ; for he knew that all other things, if he remained in guilt, would not help him against that damnation that belonged to a vile and unforgiven sinner.

This also confuteth the hypocrites, such as is our Pharisee here in the text, that glory in nothing so much, as that *they are not as other men, not unjust, no adulterer, no extortioner, nor even as this Publican* ; and thus miss of the forgiveness of sin ; and if they have missed of the beginning good, they shall never, as so standing, receive the second or the third. Justification, sanctification, glorification, they are the three things, but the order of God must not be perverted. Justification must be first, because that comes to man while he is ungodly and a sinner.

Justification cannot be where God has not passed a pardon. A pardon then is the first thing to be looked after by the sinner ; this the Pharisee did not, therefore he went down to his house unjustified ; he set the stumbling-block of his iniquity before his face when he went to inquire of the Lord ; and as he neglected, slighted, scorned, because he thought that he had no need of pardon, therefore it was given to the poor, needy, and miserable Publican, and he went away with the blessing.

Publicans, since this is so weighty a point, let me exhort you that you do not forget this prayer of your wise and elder brother, to wit, the Publican, that went up into the temple to pray. I say, forget it not, neither suffer any vain-glorious or self-conceited hypocrites with arguments, to allure you with their silly and deceitful tongues from this wholesome doctrine. Remember that you are sinners as abominable as are the Publicans, wherefore do you, as you have him for your pattern, go to God, confess, in all simple, honest, and self-abasing, your numerous and abominable sins; and be sure that in the very next place you forget not to ask for pardon, saying, *God be merciful to me a sinner.* And remember that none but God can help you against, nor keep you from, the damnation and misery that comes by sin.

Secondly, as the Publican imploreth help, so notwithstanding the sentence of the law that is gone out against him, he saith to God, be merciful to me: and also in that he concludes himself a sinner: I say, he justifieth, he approveth of the sentence of the law, that was now gone out against him, and by which he now stood condemned in his own conscience before the tribunal of God's justice. He saith not as the hypocrite, *Because I am innocent, surely his anger shall turn from me;* or what have we spoken so much against thee? No, he is none of these murmurers or complainers, but fairly falls before the law, witnesses, judge, and jury, and consenteth to the verdict, sentence, and testimony of each of them, Jer. 2. 36.: Mal. 2. 13.

To illustrate this a little, suppose a malefactor should be arraigned before a judge, and that after the witnesses, jury, and judge, have all condemned him to death for his fact, the judge again should ask him what he can say for himself, why sentence of death should not pass upon him? Now, if he saith, Nothing, but good, my lord, mercy; he confesseth the indictment, approveth of the verdict of the jury, and consenteth to the judgement of the judge.

The Publican therefore in crying mercy, justifieth
the

the sentence of the law that was gone out against his sins: He wrangleth not with the law, saying, that was too severe though many men do thus, saying, God forbid, for then wo be to us. He wrangleth not with the witness, which was his own conscience though some will buffet, smite, and stop its mouth or command it to be silent. He wrangleth not with the jury, which was the prophets and apostles, though some men cannot abide to hear all that they say. He wrangleth not with the judge, nor sheweth himself irreverently before him, but in all humble gestures that could bespeak him acquiescing with the sentence, he flieth to mercy for relief.

Nor is this alone the way of the Publican: but of other godly men before his time: When David was condemned, he justified the sentence and the judge, out of whose mouth it proceeded and so fled for succour to the mercy of God, Psal. 51. When Shemaiah the prophet pronounced God's judgements against the princes of Judah for their sin, they said, *The Lord is righteous*. When the church in the Lamentations had reckoned up several her grievous afflictions where-with she had been chastised, she, instead of complaining, doth justify the Lord, and approve of the sentence that was passed upon her, saying, *The Lord is righteous, for I have rebelled against his commandment*. So Daniel, after he had enumerated the evils that beset the church in his day, addeth, *Therefore hath the Lord brought it upon us; for the Lord our God is righteous in all his works which he doth, for we obeyed not his voice*, 2 Chron. 13. 6.; Lam. 19. 18.; Dan. 9. 14.

And this is the case with our Publican. He has transgressed a law that is holy, just, and good: the witness that accuseth him of this, is God and his conscience; he is also cast by the verdict of holy men; and all this he knows, and implicitly confesses, even in that he directs his prayer unto his judge for pardon. And it is one of the excellentest sights in the world, to see or understand a sinner thus honestly receiving the sentence of the law that is gone out against him;

him; to see and hear a Publican thus to justify God. And this God would have done for these reasons.

1. That it might be conspicuous to all that the Publican has need of mercy. This is for the glory of the justice of God, because it vindicates in its goings out against the Publican. God loveth to do things in justice and righteousness, when he goeth out against men, though it be but such a going out against them as only tendeth to their conviction and conversion. When he dealt with our father Abraham in this matter, he called him to his foot, as here he doth the Publican. And sinner, if God counts thee worthy to inherit the throne of glory, he will bring thee hither.

2. The Publican, by the power of conviction, stoops to and falleth under the righteous sentence gone forth against him, that it might be also manifest, that what afterward he shall receive is of the mere grace and sovereign goodness of God. And indeed there is no way that doth more naturally tend to make this manifest than this. For thus; there is a man proceeded against for life, by the law, and the sentence of death is in conclusion most justly and righteously passed upon him by the judge. Suppose now, that after this, this man lives, and is exalted to honour, enjoys great things, and is put into place of trust and power, and that by him that he has offended, even by him that did pass the sentence upon him.

What will all say, or what will they conclude, even upon the very first hearing of this story? Will they not say, Well, whoever he was that found himself wrapped up in this strange providence, must thank the mercy of a gracious prince; for all these things bespeak grace and favour. But,

3. As the Publican falleth willingly under the sentence, and justifieth the passing of it upon him; so by his flying to mercy for help, he declareth to all that he cannot deliver himself: He putteth help away from himself, or saith, it is not in me.

This, I say, is another thing included in this prayer, and it is a thing distinct from that. For it is possible

possible for a man to justify and fall under the sentence of the judge, and yet retain that with himself that will certainly deliver him from that sentence when it has done its worst. Many have held up their hand, and cried guilty at the bar, and yet have fetched themselves off for all that; but then they have not pleaded mercy, (for he that doth so, puts his life altogether into the hands of another), but privilege or good deeds, either done or to be done by them. But the Publican in our text puts all out of his own hand; and in effect saith to that God before whom he went up into the temple to pray, Lord, I stand here condemned at the bar of thy justice, and that worthily, for the sentence is good, and hath in righteousness gone out against me; nor can I deliver myself; I heartily and freely confess I cannot; wherefore I betake myself only to thy mercy, and do pray thee to forgive the transgressions of me a sinner. O how few be there of such kind of Publicans I mean of Publicans thus made sensible, that come unto God for mercy!

Mercy, with most, is rather a compliment, I mean while they plead it with God, than a matter of absolute necessity; they have not awfully, and in judgment and conscience, fallen under the sentence, nor put themselves out of all plea but the plea of mercy. Indeed, thus to do, is the effect of the proof of the vanity and emptiness of all experiments made use of before.

Now, there is a twofold proof of experiments; the one is, the result of practice; the other is, the result of faith,

The woman with her bloody issue made her proof by practice, when she had spent all that she had upon physicians, and was nothing bettered, but rather grew worse, Mark 5. But our Publican here proves the emptiness and vanity of any other helps, by one cast of faith upon the contents of the Bible, and by another look upon his present state of condemnation; wherefore he presently, without any more ado, condemneth all other helps, ways, modes, or means of deliverance

deliverance, and betakes himself only to the mercy of God: saying, *God be merciful to me a sinner.*

And herein he sheweth wonderful wisdom. For,

1. By this he thrusts himself under the shelter and blessing of the promise; and I am sure it is better and safer to do so, than to rely upon the best of excellencies that this world can afford, Hos. 14. 1, 2, 3.

2. He takes the ready way to please God: for God takes more delight in shewing of mercy, than in any thing that we can do, Hos. 6. 6.; Matth. 9. 13. & 12. 7. Yea, and that also is the man that pleaseth him, even he that hopes in his mercy, Psal. 147. 11. The Publican, therefore, whatever the Pharisee might think, stood all this while upon sure ground and had by far the start of him for heaven. Alas! his dull head could look no further than to the conceit of the pitiful beauty and splendor of his own stinking righteousness. Nor durst he leave that to trust wholly to the mercy of God; but the Publican comes out, though in his sins, yet like an awakened, enlightened, resolved man, and first abases himself, then gives God the glory of his justice, and after that the glory of his mercy, by saying, *God be merciful to me a sinner*; and thus in the ears of the angels he did ring the changes of heaven. And,

3. The Publican, in his thus putting himself upon mercy, sheweth, that in his opinion, there is more virtue in mercy to save, than there is in the law and sin to condemn. And although this is not counted a great matter to do, while men are far from the law, and while their conscience is asleep within them; yet when the law comes near, and conscience is awake, who so tries it, will find it a laborious work. Cain could not do thus for his heart, no, nor soul; nor Judas neither. This is another kind of thing than most men think it to be, or shall find it, whenever they shall behold God's angry face, and when they shall hear the words of his law.

However, our Publican did it, and ventured his body, soul, and future condition for ever in this bottom, with other the saints and servants of God, leaving of the world to swim over the sea of God's wrath

(if they will) in their weak and simple vessels of bulrushes, or to lean upon their cobweb-hold, when he shall arise to the judgement that he hath appointed.

In the mean time, pray God awaken us as he did the Publican; pray God enlighten us as he did the Publican; pray God grant us boldness to come to him as the Publican did; and also in that trembling spirit as he did, when he cried in the temple before him, *God be merciful to me a sinner.*

Thus having passed over his prayer, we come in the next place to his gestures; for in my judgement the right understanding of them will give us yet more conviction of the Publican's sense and awakening of spirit under this present action of his.

And I have observed many a poor wretch that have readily had recourse to the Publican's prayer, that never knew what the Publican's gestures, in the presence of God, while in prayer before him, did mean. Nor must any man be admitted to think, that those gestures of his were in custom, and a formality among the Jews in those days; for it is evident enough by the carriage of the Pharisee, that it was below them and their mode, when they came into the temple, or when they prayed any where else; and they in those days were counted for the best of men; and in religious matters they were to imitate and take their examples at the hands of the best, not at the hands of the worst.

The Publican's gestures then were properly his own caused by the guilt of sin, and by that dread of the majesty of God that was upon his spirit. And a comely posture it was, else Christ Jesus, the Son of God, would never have taken that particular notice thereof as he did, nor have smiled upon it so much as to take, and distinctly repeat it, as that which made his prayer the more weighty, also to be taken notice of. Yea, in mine opinion, the Lord Jesus committed it to record; for that he liked it, and for that it will pass for some kind of touchstone of prayer, that is made in good sense of sin and of God, and of need of his goodness and mercy. For verily, all these postures,

postures signify sense, sight of a lost condition, and a heart in good earnest for mercy.

I know that they may be counterfeited, and Christ Jesus knows who doth so too; but that will not hinder, or make weak or invalid what hath already been spoke about it. But to forbear to make a further prologue, and to come to the handling of particulars:

And the Publican standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes to heaven, but smote upon his breast, &c.

Three things, as I told you already, we may perceive in these words, by which his Publican posture or gestures, are set forth.

1. He stands *afar off*.

2. He *would not lift up so much as his eyes to heaven.*

3. He *smote upon his breast, &c.*

For the first of these, *He stood afar off*. And the Publican standing afar off. This is, I say, the first thing, the first posture of his with which we are acquainted, and it informeth us of several things.

First, That he came not with senselessness of the Majesty of God, when he came to pray, as the Pharisee did, and as sinners commonly do. For this standing back, or afar off, declares, That the Majesty of God had an awe upon his spirit; He saw whither, to whom, and for what, he was now approaching the temple. It is said in the 20th of Exodus, That when the people saw the thunderings and lightnings, and the noise of the trumpet, and the mountain smoaking, (and all these were signs of God's terrible presence, and dreadful majesty), they removed themselves, and *stood afar off*, Exod. 20. 18. This behaviour therefore of the Publican did well become his present action, especially since, in his own eyes, he was yet an unforgiven sinner. Alas! What is God's Majesty to a sinful man, but a consuming fire? And what is a sinful man in himself, or in his approach to God, but as stubble fully dry?

How then could the Publican do otherwise (than what he did) than stand afar off, if he either thought

of God or himself? Indeed, the people afore named, before they saw God in his terrible majesty, could scarce be kept off from the mount with words and bounds, as it is now the case of many: Their blindness gives them boldness; their rudeness gives them confidence; but when they shall see what the Publican saw, and felt, and understood, as he, they will pray, and stand afar off, even as these people did. They removed and stood afar off, and then fell to praying of Moses, that this dreadful sight and sound might be taken from them. And what if I should say, he stood afar off for fear of a blow, though he came for mercy, as it is said of them, *They stood afar off for fear of her torments.* Rev. 18. 10. 18.

I know what it is to go to God for mercy, and stand all that while through fear afar off, being possessed with this, will not God now smite me at once to the ground for my sins? David thought something when he said as he prayed, *Cast me not out from thy presence, and take not thy Holy Spirit from me,* Psal. 51. 11.

There is none knows, but those that have them, what turns and returns, what coming on and going off, there is in the spirit of a man that indeed is awakened, and that stands awakened before the glorious Majesty in prayer. The prodigal also made his prayer to his Father intentionally, while he was yet a great way off. And so did the lepers too: *And as he entered into a certain village there met him ten men that were lepers, which stood afar off. And they lift up their voices and said, Jesus, Master, have mercy on us,* Luke 17. 12, 13.

See here, it has been the custom of praying men, to keep their distance, and not to be rudely bold in rushing into the presence of the Holy and Heavenly Majesty, especially if they have been sensible of their own vileness and sins, as the prodigal, the lepers, and our poor Publican was. Yea, Peter himself, when upon a time he perceived more than commonly he did of the majesty of Jesus his Lord, what doth he do? *When Simon Peter saw it, (says the text)*

he fell down at Jesus knees, saying, Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord, Luke 5. 3, 8. Oh! when men see God and themselves, it fills them with holy fear, of the greatness of the majesty of God, as well as with love to, and desire after his mercy.

Besides, by his standing afar off, it might be to intimate, that he now had in mind, and with great weight upon his conscience, the infinite distance that was betwixt God and him. Men should know that and tremble in the thoughts of it, when they are about to approach the omnipotent presence.

What is poor sorry man, poor dust and ashes, that he should croud it up, and go jostlingly into the presence of the great God? especially since it is apparent the disproportion that is betwixt God and him. Esther, when she went to supplicate the king her husband for her people, made neither use of her beauty nor relation, nor the privileges of which she might have had temptation to make use, especially at such a time, and in such exigencies, as then did compass her about; but, I say, she made not use of them to thrust herself into his presence, but knew, and kept her distance, standing in the inward court of his palace, until he held out the golden sceptre to her; *Then Esther drew near, and touched the top thereof, Esth. 5. 1, 2.*

Men also, when they come into the presence of God, should know their distance; yea, and shew that they know it too, by such gestures, and carriages, and behaviours, that are seemly. A remarkable saying is that of Solomon, *Keep thy foot, saith he, when thou goest into the house of God, and be more ready to hear, than to offer the sacrifice of fools; for they consider not that they do evil.* (And as they should keep their foot, so also he adds), *Be not rash with thy mouth and let not thine heart be hasty to utter any thing before God; for God is in heaven, and thou upon earth, therefore let thy words be few, Ecclef. 5. 1, 2.*

Three things the Holy Ghost exhorteth to in this text.

The one is, That we look to our feet, and not be forward to crowd into God's presence.

Another is, That we should also look well to our tongues, that they be not rash in uttering any thing before God.

And the third is, Because of the infinite distance that is betwixt God and us, which is intimated by them words, *for God is in heaven, and thou upon earth.*

The Publican therefore shewed great wisdom, holy shame, and humility, in this brave gesture of his, namely, in his standing afar off, when he went up into the temple to pray. But this is not all.

Secondly, The Publican, in standing afar off, left room for an Advocate, and High-priest, a Day's-man, to come betwixt, to make peace between God and this poor creature. Moses, the great mediator of the Old Testament, was to go nigher to God than the rest of the elders, or those of the people, *Exod. 21. 1. Yea, the rest of the people were expressly commanded to worship, standing afar off, ver. 1 2. No man of the sons of Aaron that hath a blemish was to come nigh. No man that hath a blemish of the seed of Aaron, shall come nigh to offer the offerings of the Lord made by fire. He shall not come nigh to offer the bread of his God, Lev. 21. 21.*

The Publican durst not be his own mediator; he knew he had a blemish, and was infirm, and therefore he stands back; for he knew that it was none of him that his God had chosen to come near unto him, to offer the fat and the blood, *Ezek. 44. 13, 14, 15.* The Publican therefore was thus far right; he took not up the room himself, neither with his person, nor his performances, but stood back, and gave place to the High-priest that was to be intercessor.

We read, that when Zacharias went into the temple to burn incense, as at that time his lot was, *The whole multitude of the people was praying without, Luke 1. 9, 10.* They left him where he was, near to God, between God and them, mediating for them for the offering of incense by the chief-priest was a figurative making of intercession for the people, and they maintained their distance.

It is a great matter, in praying to God, not to go too far, nor come too short, in that duty, I mean in the duty of prayer; and a man is very apt to do one or the other. The Pharisee went so far, he was too bold, he came into the temple making such a ruffle with his own excellencies, there was in his thoughts no need of a Mediator. He also went up so nigh to God, that he took up the room and place of the Mediator himself; but this poor Publican, he knows his distance, and keeps it, and leaves room for the High-priest to come and intercede for him with God. He stood afar off: not too far off, for that is the room and place of unbelievers; and in that sense this saying is true, *For lo, they that are far from thee shall perish*, Psal. 73. 27.; that is, they that whose unbelief hath set their heart and affections more upon their idols, and that have been made to cast God behind their backs, to follow and go a-whoring after them.

Hitherto, therefore, it appears, that though the Pharisee had more righteousness than the Publican, yet the Publican had more spiritual righteousness than the Pharisee; And that though the Publican had a baser, and more ugly outside than the Pharisee, yet the Publican knew how to prevail with God for mercy better than he.

As for the Publican's posture of standing in prayer it is excuseable, and that by the very Father of the faithful himself: For Abraham stood praying when he made intercession for Sodom, Gen. 18. 22, 23. Christ also alloweth it, where he saith, *And when ye stand praying, forgive if ye have ought against any, that your Father also which is in heaven may forgive you your trespasses*, Mark 11. 25. Indeed there is no flinted order prescribed for our thus behaving of ourselves in prayer, whether kneeling, or standing, or walking, or lying, or sitting; for all these postures have been used by the godly. *Paul kneeled down and prayed*, Acts 20. 26. Abraham and the Publican stood and prayed. David prayed as he walked,

2 Sam. 15. 30, 31. Abraham prayed lying upon his face, Gen. 17. 17, 18. Moses prayed sitting, Exod. 17. 12. And indeed prayer, effectual fervent prayer may be, and often is, made unto God, under all these circumstances of behaviour: For God has not tied us up to any of them; and he that shall tie himself, or his people, to any of these, doth more than he hath warrant for from God; And let such take care of innovating; it is the next way to make hypocrites and dissemblers in those duties in which they should be sincere.

True, which of those soever a man shall chuse to himself for the present, to perform this solemn duty in, it is required of him, and God expects it, that he should pray to him in truth, and with desire, affection, and hunger, after those things, that with his tongue he maketh mention of before the throne of God. And indeed without this, all is nothing. But alas! how few be there in the world, whose heart and mouth in prayer shall go together? Dost thou, when thou askest for the spirit, or faith, or love to God, to holiness, to saints, to the word, and the like, ask for them with love to them, desire of them, hungering after them? Oh! this is a mighty thing! and yet prayer is no more before God, than as it is seasoned with these blessed qualifications. Wherefore it is said, that while men are praying, God is searching of the heart, to see what is the meaning of the spirit, (or whether there be the spirit and his meaning in all that the mouth hath uttered, either by words, sighs, or groans), because it is by him, and through his help only, that any make prayers according to the will of God, Rom. 8. 26, 27. Whatever thy posture therefore shall be, see that thy prayers be pertinent and fervent, not mocking of thine own soul with words, while thou wantest and art an utter stranger to the very vital and living spirit of prayer.

Now, our Publican had and did exercise the very spirit of prayer in prayer. He prayed sensibly, seriously, affectionately, hungering, thirsting, and with longing after that for which with his mouth he implored

plored the God heaven ; His heart and soul was in his words, and it was that which made his prayer PRAYER; even because he prayed in PRAYER; he prayed inwardly as well as outwardly.

David tells us, that God heard the voice of his supplication, the voice of his cry, the voice of his tears and the voice of his roaring. For indeed are all these acceptable. Affection and fervent desire make them sound well in the ears of God. Tears, supplications, prayers, cries, may be all of them done in formality, hypocrisy, and from other causes, and to other ends than that which is honest and right in God's sight: For God would search and look after the voice of his tears, supplications, roarings, prayers, and cries.

And if men had less care to please men, and more to please God, in the matter and manner of praying the world would be at a better pass than it is. But this is not in man's power to help, and to amend. When the Holy Ghost comes upon men with great conviction of their state and condition, and of the use and excellency of the grace of sincerity and humility in prayer, then, and not till then, will the grace of prayer be more prized, and the specious, flouting, complimentary lips of flatterers, be more laid aside. I have said it already, and will say it again, that there is now-a-days a great deal of wickedness committed in the very duty of prayer; by words of which men have no sense by reaching after such conclusion, and clenches therein, as make their persons be admired; by studying for, and labouring after such enlargements as the spirit accompanieth not the heart in. O Lord God, make our hearts upright in us, as in all points and parts of our profession so in this solemn appointment of God! *If I regard iniquity in my heart, said David, the Lord will not hear my prayer.* But if I be truly sincere, he will, and then it is no matter whether I kneel, or stand, or sit, or lie, or walk; for I shall do none of these, nor put up my prayers under any of these circumstances, lightly, foolishly and idly, but to beautify this gesture with the inward working of my mind

and spirit in prayer; that whether I stand or sit, walk or lie down, grace and gravity, humility and sincerity, shall make my prayer profitable, and by outward behaviour comely in his eyes, with whom (in prayer) I now have to do.

And had not our Publican been inwardly seasoned with these, Christ would have taken but little pleasure in his modes and outward behaviour: But being so honest inwardly, and in the matter of his prayer, his gestures by that were made beauteous also; and therefore it is that our Lord so delightfully dilateth upon them, and draweth them out at length before the eyes of others.

I have often observed, that which is natural, and so comely in one, looks odiously when imitated by another. I speak as to gestures and actions in preaching and prayer. Many, I doubt not, but will imitate the Publican, and that both in the prayer and gestures of the Publican, whose persons and actions will yet stink in the nostrils of him that is holy and just, and that searcheth the heart and the reins.

Well, the Publican stood and prayed; he stood afar off, and prayed, and his prayers came even to the ears of God.

And the Publican standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes to heaven, &c.

We are now come to another of his postures. *He would not, says the text, so much as lift up his eyes to heaven.* Here therefore was another gesture added to that which went before; and a gesture that a great while before had been condemned by the Holy Ghost himself. *Is it such a fast that I have chosen, a day for a man to afflict his soul? Is it to bow down his head like a bulrush, Isa. 58. 5.*

But why condemned then, and smiled upon now? Why! Because done in hypocrisy then, and in sincerity now. Hypocrisy, and a spirit of error, that he shall take no pleasure in them; but sincerity, and honesty in duties, will make even them comely in the sight of men. May I not say before God, The Recabites were not commanded of God, but of their father

father, to do as they did? but, because they were sincere in their obedience thereto, even God himself maketh use of what they did, to condemn the disobedience of the Jews; and moreover doth tell the Recabites, at last, that they should not want a man to stand before him for ever. *And Jeremiah said to the house of the Recabites, thus saith the Lord of Hosts, the God of Israel, because ye have obeyed the commandment of Jonadab your father, and kept all his precepts, and done according to all that he hath commanded you; therefore, thus saith the Lord of Hosts, the God of Israel, Jonadab, the son of Racab, shall not want a man to stand before me for ever.*

He would not lift up his eyes to heaven. Why? Surely because shame had covered his face. Shame will make a man blush and hang his head like a bulrush; shame for sin is a virtue, a comely thing; yea, a beauty-spot in the face of a sinner that cometh to God for mercy.

God complains of the house of Israel, that they could sin, and that without shame; yea, and threateneth them too with fore repeated judgements, *because they were not ashamed*, it is in Jer. 8. Their crimes in general were, they turned every one to his course, as the horse runneth into the battle. In particular, they were such as rejected God's word; they loved this world, and set themselves against the prophet's crying, Peace, peace, when they cried, Judgement, judgement: *And were not ashamed when they had committed abomination; nay, they were not at all ashamed, neither could they blush; therefore shall they fall among them that fall: in the time of their visitation they shall be cast down, saith the Lord, ver. 12.* Oh! to stand, or sit, or lie, or kneel, or walk before God in prayer, with blushing cheeks for sin, is one of the excellent sights that can be seen in the world.

Wherefore the church taketh some kind of heart to herself in that she could lie down in her shame yea, and makes that a kind of an argument with God to prove that her prayers did come from her heart and also that he would hear them, Jer. 3. 22.—23

Shame

Shame for sin argueth sense of sin yea, a right sense of sin, a godly sense of sin; Ephraim pleads this when under the hand of God: *I was* (saith he) *ashamed, yea, even confounded, because I did bear the sins of my youth.* But what follows? Is Ephraim my dear son? is he a pleasant child? for since I spake against him, I do earnestly remember him still: therefore my bowels are troubled for him: I will surely have mercy upon him, saith the Lord, Jer. 31. 18, 19.

I know that there is a shame that is not the spirit of an honest heart; but that rather floweth from sudden surprisal, when the sinner is unawares taken in the act, in the very manner. And thus sometimes the house of Israel was taken: and then, when they blushed, their shame is compared to the shame of a thief. *As the thief is shamed when he is found, so is the house of Israel ashamed; they, their kings, their princes and priests, and their prophets.*

But where were they taken, or about what were they found? Why they were found saying to a stock, *Thou art my father, and to a stone, thou hast brought me forth.* God caughted them thus doing, and this made them ashamed, even as the thief is ashamed, when the owner doth catch him stealing of his horse.

But this was not the Publican's shame; this shame brings not a man into the temple to pray, to stand willingly, and to take shame before God in prayer. This shame makes one rather to fly from his face, and to count one's self most at ease, when farthest off from God, Jer. 2. 26, 27.

The Publican's shame, therefore, which he demonstrated by hanging down his head, was godly and holy, and much like that of the prodigal, when he said, *Father, I have sinned against heaven, and in thy sight, and am no more worthy to be called thy son,* Luke 15. 21. I suppose that his postures were much the same with the Publican's, as were his prayers, for the substance of them. O however grace did work in both to the same end, they were both of them, after a godly manner, ashamed of their sins!

He would not lift up so much as his to eyes heaven.

He could not, he would not: which yet more fully makes it appear, that it was shame, not guilt only, or chiefly (though it is manifest enough that he had guilt) by his crying, *God be merciful to me a sinner.* I say, guilt was not the chief cause of hanging down his head, because it saith, he would not; for when guilt is the cause of stooping, it lieth not in the will, or in the power thereof, to help one up.

David tells us, that when he was under the guilt, his iniquities were gone over his head: *As an heavy burthen, they were too heavy for him;* and that with them he was bowed down greatly. Or, as he says in another place, *Mine iniquities have taken hold upon me, so that I am not able to look up,* Psal. 38; & 40. I am not able to do it: guilt disableth the understanding and conscience, shame makes all willingly fall at the feet of Christ.

He would not. He knew what he was, what he had been, and should be, if God had not mercy upon him; yea, he knew also that God knew what he was, had been, and would be, if mercy prevented not; wherefore thought he, wherefore should I lift up the head? I am no righteous man, no godly man, I have not served God, but Satan; this I know, this God knows, this angels know, wherefore I will not lift up the head. It is as much as to say, I will not be an hypocrite, like the Pharisee: for lifting up of the head signifies innocency and harmlessness of life, or good conscience, and the testimony thereof, under, and in the midst of all accusations. Wherefore this was the counsel of Zophar to Job; *If saith he thou prepare thine heart, and stretch out thine hand towards him; if iniquity be in thine hand, put it far away, and let not wickedness dwell in thy tabernacles: for then shalt thou lift up thy face without spot; yea; thou shalt be stedfast, and shalt not fear,* Job 11. 13, 14, 15.

This was not the Publican's state, he had lived in lewdness and villany all his days; nor had he prepared his heart to seek the Lord God of his fathers; he had not cleansed his heart nor hands from violence

nor done that which was lawful and right. He only had been convinced of his evil ways, and was come into the temple as he was, all foul, and in his filthy garments, and amidst his pollutions; how then could he be innocent, holy, or without spot? and consequently how could he lift up his face to God? I remember what Abner said to Asahel, *Turn thee aside* (said he) *from following me, wherefore should I smite thee to the ground? how then should I hold up my face to Joab thy brother?*

As if he had said, if I kill thee, I shall blush, be ashamed, and hang my head like a bulrush, the next time I come into the company of thy brother.

This was the Publican's case, he was guilty, he had sinned, he had committed a trespass, and now being come into the temple, into the presence of that God whose laws he had broken, and against whom he had sinned, how could he lift up his head? how could he do it? No, it better became him to take his shame, and to hang his head in token of guilt; and indeed he did, and did it to purpose too, for he would not lift up, no not so much as his eyes to heaven.

True, some would have done it, the Pharisee did it; though if he had considered that hypocrisy, and the leaning to his own righteousness had been a sin, he would have found as little cause to have done it, as did the Publican himself. But, I say he did it, and sped therein; he went down to his house, as he came up into the temple, a poor unjust Pharisee, whose person and prayer were both rejected; because like the whore of whom we read in the Proverbs, after he had practised all manner of hypocrisy, he comes into the temple and wipes his mouth, and saith, *I have done no wickedness*, Prov. 30. 20. He lifts up his head, his face, his eyes, to heaven; he struts, he vaunts himself; he swaggers, he vapours, and cries up himself, saying, *God, I thank thee, I am not as other men are*.

True, had he come and stood before a stock or stone, he might have said thus, and not have been reprehended;

reprehended; for such are gods that see not, nor hear, neither do they understand. But to come before the true God, the living God, the God that fills heaven and earth by his presence, and that knows the things that come into the mind of man, even every one of them, I say, to come into his house, to stand before him; and thus to lift up his head and eyes in such hypocrisy before him; this was abominable, this was to tempt God, and to prove him; yea, to challenge him to know what was in man, if he could, even as those who said, *How can God (see) know? can he judge through the dark cloud?* Job. 22. 13.; Psal. 73. 11.

But the Publican, no, would not do this; He would not lift up so much as his eyes to heaven. As who should say, O Lord, I have been against thee, a traitor and a rebel, and like a traitor and a rebel before thee will I stand. I will bear my shame before thee in the presence of the holy angels; yea, I will prevent thy judging of me, by judging myself in thy sight, and will stand as condemned before thou passest sentence upon me.

This is now for a sinner to go to the end of things. For what is God's design in the work of conviction for sin, and in his awakening of the conscience about it? What is his end, I say, but to make the sinner sensible of what he hath done, and that he might unfeignedly judge himself for the same. Now this this our Publican doth; his will therefore is now subjected to the word of God, and he justifies him in all his ways and works towards him, Blessed be God for any experience of these things.

He would not lift up so much as his eyes to heaven. He knew by his deeds and deservings, that he had no portion there; nor would he divert his mind from the remembering, and from being affected with the evil of his ways.

Some men, when they are under the guilt and conviction of their evil life, will do what they can to look any way, and that on purpose to divert their minds, and to call them off from thinking on what they

they have done ; and by their thus doing, they bring many evils more upon their souls ; For this is a kind of striving with God, and a shewing a dislike to his ways. Would not you think, if when you are shewing your son or your servant his faults, if he should do what he could to divert and take off his mind from what you are saying, that he striveth against you, and sheweth dislike of your doings? What else mean the complaints of masters and of fathers in this matter? I have a servant, I have a son, that doth contrary to my will. O but why do you not chide them for it? The answer is, so I do; but they do not regard my words; they do what they can, even while I am speaking, to divert their minds from my words and counsels. Why, all men will cry out this is base, this is worthy of great rebuke; such a son, such a servant, deserveth to be shut out of doors, and so made to learn better breeding by want and hardship.

But the Publican would not divert his mind from what a present God was about to make him sensible of, no not by a look on the choicest object; he would not lift up so much as his eyes to heaven. They are but bad scholars whose eyes, when their master is teaching of them, are wandering off their books.

God saith unto men, when he is a teaching them to know the evil of their ways, as the angel said to the prophet, when he came to shew him the pattern of the temple, *Son of man, says he, behold with thine eyes, and hear with thine ears, and set thine heart upon all that I shew thee; for to the intent that I might shew them unto thee, art thou brought hither,* Ezek. 40. 4 So to the intent that God might shew to the Publican the evil of his ways, therefore was he brought under the power of convictions, and the terrors of the law; and he also, like a good learner, gave good heed unto that lesson that now he was learning of God; for he would not lift up so much as his eyes to heaven.

Looking downwards doth oft-times bespeak men very ponderous and deep in their cogitations; also that the matter about which in their minds they are
now

now concerned, hath taken great hold of their spirits. The Publican hath now new things, great things, and long-lived things, to concern himself about: His sins, the curse, with death, and hell, began now to stare him in the face: wherefore it was no time now to let his heart, or his eyes, or his cogitations, wander, but to be fixed, and to be vehemently applying of himself (as a sinner) to the God of heaven for mercies.

Few know the weight of sin: When the guilt thereof takes hold of the conscience, it commands homewards all the faculties of the soul. No man can go out or off now; Now he is wind bound, or as Paul says, caught: Now he is made to possess bitter days, bitter nights, bitter hours, bitter thoughts; nor can he shift them, for this sin is ever before him. As David said, *For I acknowledge my transgressions, and my sin is ever before me*, in my eye, and sticketh fast in every one of my thoughts, Psal. 51. 3.

He would not lift up so much as his eyes to heaven.

[*But smote upon his breast.*] This was the third and last of his gestures; *He smote upon his breast*, to wit, with his hand, or with his fist. I read of several gestures with the hand and foot, according to the working and passions of the mind. It is said *Balak smote his hands together*, being angry because that Balaam had blessed and not cursed for him the children of Israel.

God says also, that he had smitten his hands together, at the sins of the children of Israel. God also bids the prophet stamp with his feet, and smite with his hand upon his thigh, Num. 24. 10.; Ezek. 22. 13.; & 6. 11; & 21 12. upon sundry occasions, and at several enormities; but the Publican here is said to smite upon his breast. And,

1. Smiting upon the breast betokeneth sorrow for something done. This is an experiment common among men; and indeed, therefore, (as I take it), doth our Lord Jesus put him under this gesture in the act and exercise of his repentance, because it is that which doth most lively set it forth.

Suppose

Suppose a man comes to great damage for some folly that he has wrought, and he be made sorrowful for (being and) doing such folly, there is nothing more common than for such a man (if he may) to walk to and fro in the room where he is, with head hung down, fetching ever and anon a bitter sigh, and smiting himself upon the breast in his dejected condition: *But smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to be merciful to me a sinner.*

2. Smiting upon the breast is sometimes a token of indignation and abhorrence of something thought upon. I read in Luke, that when Christ was crucified, those spectators that stood to behold the barbarous usage that he endured at the hands of his enemies, smote their breasts and returned. *And all the people says Luke that came together to that sight, beholding the things that were done, smote their breasts, and returned,* Luke 23. 48.; Smote their breasts; that is, in token of indignation against, and abhorrence of the cruelty that was used to the Son of God.

Here also we have our Publican smiting upon his breast, in token of indignation against, and abhorrence of his former life; and indeed, without indignation against, and abhorrence of his former life, his repentance had not been good. Wherefore the apostle doth make indignation against sin, and against ourselves, one of the signs of true repentance, 2 Cor. 7. 11.; and his indignation against sin in general, and against his former life in particular; was manifested by his smiting upon the breast; even as Ephraim's smiting upon the thigh was a sign and token of his: *Surely, says he, after that I was turned I repented; and after that I was instructed, I smote upon my thigh: I was ashamed, yea, even confounded, because I did bear the reproach of my youth,* Jer. 31. 19. Man, when he vehemently dislikes a thing, is very apt to shew a dislike to that thing he hath, by this or another outward gesture; as in snuffing or snorting at it, or in deriding; or, as some say, in blowing of their noses at it, Ezek. 8. 17.; Mal. 1. 13.; Luke 16. 64.; but the Publican here chuseth rather to use

use this most solemn posture; for smiting upon the breast seems to imply a more serious, solemn, grave way or manner of dislike, than any of those last mentioned do.

3. Smiting upon the breast, seems to intimate a quarrel with the heart, for beguiling, deluding, flattering, seducing, and enticing of him to sin; for as conviction for sin begets in man (I mean if it be through) a sense of the sore and plague of the heart, so repentance (if it be right) begets in man an outcry against the heart; for as much as by that light, by which repentance takes occasion, the sinner is made to see, that the heart is the fountain and well-spring of sin. *For from within, out of the heart of man, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, covetousness, &c.* Mark 7. 21, 22, 23. And hence it is, that commonly young converts do complain so of their hearts, calling them wicked, treacherous, deceitful, desperate ones.

Indeed, one difference between true and false repentance lieth in this. The man that truly repents crieth out of his heart; but the other, as Eve, upon the serpent, or something else. And that the Publican perceived his heart to be taught, I conclude, by his smiting upon his breast.

4. Smiting upon the breast, seems to intimate one apprehensive of some new, sudden, strange, and amazing thing; As when a man sees some strange sight in the air, or heareth some sudden or dismal sound in the clouds; why, as he is struck into a deep damp in his mind, so it is a wonder if he can keep or hold back from smiting upon his breast.

Now, oftentimes a sight of God and sense of sin, comes to the sinner, like a flash of lightening, (not for short continuance, but) for suddenness, and so for surprisal; so that the sinner is struck, taken and captivated to his own amazement, with what so unexpectedly is come upon him. It is said of Paul, at his conversion, that when conviction of his bad life took fast hold of his conscience, he trembled, and was astonished, Acts 9. 6. and although we read not of any particular circumstance of his behaviour un-

*der his conviction outwardly, yet it is almost impossible but he must have some, and those of the most solid sort. For there is such a sympathy betwixt the soul and the body, that the one cannot be in distress or comfort, but the other must partake of and also signify the same. If it be comfort, then it is shewn, by leaping, skipping, chearfulness of the countenance or some other outward gesture. If it be sorrow or heaviness of spirit, then that is shewed by the body, in weeping, sighing, groaning, shaking of the head, a lowering countenance, stamping, smiting upon the thigh or breast, as here the Publican did.

We must not therefore look upon these outward actions or gestures of the Publican, to be empty insignificant things; but to be such, that in truth did express and shew the temper, frame, and complexion of his soul. For Christ, the wisdom of God, hath mentioned them to that very end, that in and by them might be held forth, and that men might see, as in a glass, the very emblem of a converted, and truly penitent sinner. *He smote upon his breast.*

5. Smiting upon his breast, is sometimes to signify a mixture of distrust, joined with hope. And indeed in young converts, hope and distrust, or a degree of despair, do work and answer one another, as doth the noise of the balance of the watch in the pocket. Life and death is always the motion of the mind then, and this noise continues until faith is stronger grown, and until the soul is better acquainted with the methods and ways of God with a sinner. Yea, was but a carnal man in a convert's heart, and could see, he should discern these two, to wit, hope and fear, to have a continual motion in the soul: wrestling and opposing one another, as doth light and darkness in striving for the victory.

And hence it is that you find such people so fickle and uncertain in their spirits; now on the mount, then in the valleys; now in the sunshine, then in shade, now warm, then frozen; now bonny and blithe, then in a moment pensive and sad; as thinking of a portion no where but in hell. This will

cause smiting on the breast; nor can I imagine that the Publican was as yet farther than thus far in the Christian's progress.

6. Smiting upon the breast, seems to intimate, that the party so doing is very apprehensive of some great loss that he has sustained, either by negligence, carelessness, foolishness, or the like. And this is the way in which men do lose their souls. Now, to lose a thing, a great thing, the only choice thing that a man has, negligently, carelessly, foolishly, or the like, why, it puts aggravations into the thoughts of the loss that the man has sustained, and aggravations into the thoughts of them go out of the soul, and come in upon a sudden, even as the bailiff, or the king's serjeant at arms, and at every appearance of them, makes the soul start, and starting, it smites upon the breast.

I might multiply particulars; but to be brief, we have before us a sensible soul, a sorrowful soul, a penitent soul; one that prays indeed, that prays sensibly, affectionately, effectually; one that sees his loss, that fears and trembleth before God in consideration of it, and one that knows no way but the right way, to secure himself from perishing, to wit, by having humble and hearty recourse to the God of heaven for mercy.

I should now come to speak something by way of use and application; but before I do that, I will briefly draw up, and present you with a few conclusions that in my judgement do naturally flow from the text; therefore in this place I will read over the text again.

Two men went up into the temple to pray; the one a Pharisee, the other a Publican. The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, God, I thank thee, that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this Publican. I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all that I possess. And the Publican standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner.

From

From these words I gather these several conclusions, with these inferences.

1. It doth not always follow, that they that pray do know God, or love him, or trust in him. This conclusion is evident by the Pharisee in the text; he prayed, but he knew not God; he loved not God, he trusted not in God; that is, he knew him not in his Son, nor loved, nor trusted in him. He was, though a praying man, far off from this. Whence it may be inferred, that those that pray not at all cannot be good, cannot know, love, or trust in God. For if the star, though it shine, is not the sun, then surely a clod of dirt cannot be the sun. Why, a praying man doth as far outstrip a non-praying man as a star outstrips a clod of earth. A non-praying man lives like a beast. *The ox knows his owner, and the ass his master's crib; but this man doth not know but this man doth not consider,* Isa 1. 3. The prayerless man is therefore of no religion, except he be an Atheist, or an Epicurean. Therefore the non-praying man is numbered among the Heathens, and among those that know not God, and is appointed and designed by the sentence of the word to the fearful wrath of God, Psal. 79. 6.; Jer. 10. 25.

2. A second conclusion is, That the man that prays, if in his prayer he pleads for acceptance, either in whole or in part, for his own good deeds, is in a miserable state. This also is gathered from the Pharisee here; he prayed, but in this prayer he pleaded his own good deeds for acceptance, that is, of his person, and therefore went down to his house unjustified. And he is in this condition that doth thus. The conclusion is true, forasmuch as the Pharisee mentioned in the parable is not so spoken of, for the sake of that sect of men, but to caution, forewarn, and bid all men take heed, that they by doing as he, procure not his rejection of God, and be sent away from his presence unjustified. I do therefore infer from hence, that if he that pleadeth his own good doing for personal acceptance with God, be thus miserable, then he that teacheth men so to do, is much

more miserable. We always conclude, that a ring-leader in an evil way, is more blame-worthy, than those that are led of him. This falls hard upon the leading Socinians and others, who teach, that mens works make their persons accepted of God.

True, they say, through Christ; but that is brought merely to delude the simple with, and is an horrible lie; for we read not in all the word of God as to personal justification in the sight of God from the curse, (and that is the question under consideration), that it must be by man's righteousness, as made prevalent by Christ's, but contrariwise by his, and his only, without the deeds, works, or righteousness of the law, which is our righteousness. Wherefore, I say, the teachers and leaders of this doctrine have the greater sin.

3. A third conclusion is, They that use high and flaunting language in prayer, their simplicity and godly sincerity is to be questioned as to the doing of that duty sincerely. This still flows from our text; the Pharisee greatly used this; for higher and more flaunting language can hardly be found, than in the Pharisee's mouth; nor will ascribing to God by the same mouth laud and praise, help the business at all: for to be sure, where the effect is base and rotten, the cause cannot be good.

The Pharisee would hold himself, that he was not as other men, and then gives thanks to God for this: But the conclusion was most vilely false, and therefore the praise for it could not but be foolish, vain, and frivolous. Whence I infer, that if to use such language in prayer is dangerous, then to affect the use thereof is yet more dangerous. Prayer must be made with humble hearts and sensible words, and of that we have treated before; wherefore high, flaunting, swelling words of vanity, become not a sinner's mouth; no not at any time; much less when he comes to, and presents himself before God in that solemn duty of prayer. But, I say, there are some that so affect the Pharisee's mode, that they cannot be well if in some sort or other they be not in the practice

practice of it, not knowing what they say, nor where-
of they affirm; but these are greatly addicted to hy-
pocrisy, and desire of vain-glory, especially if the
sound of their words be within the reach of other
mens ears.

4. A fourth conclusion is, That reformation and
amendment, though good, and before men, are no-
thing as to justification with God. This is manifest
by the condition of our Pharisee; he was a reformed
man, a man beyond others for personal righteousness,
yet he went out of the temple from God unjustified;
his works came to nothing with God. Hence I infer,
that the man that hath nothing to commend him to
God of his own, yet stands as fair before God for
justification, and so acceptance, as any other man in
the world.

5. A fifth conclusion is, It is the sensible sinner,
the self-bemoaning sinner, the self-judging sinner, the
self-abhorring sinner, and the self-condemning sinner,
whose prayers prevail with God for mercy. Hence
I infer, that one reason why men make so many
prayers, and prevail no more with God, is because
their prayers are rather the floatings of Pharisaical
fancies, than the fruits of sound sense of sin, and
sincere desires of enjoying God in mercy, and in the
fruits of the Holy Ghost.

Prison;

Prison Meditations, directed to the hearts of suffering Saints and reigning Sinners.

(By JOHN BUNYAN, in Prison. M,DC,LXV.)

1. **F**RIEND, I salute thee in the Lord
and wish thou may'st abound
In faith, and have a good regard
to keep on holy ground,
2. Thou dost encourage me to hold
my head above the flood,
Thy counsel better is than gold,
in need thereof I stood.
3. Good counsel's good at any time,
the wise will it receive,
Tho' fools count he commits a crime
who doth good counsel give.
4. I take it kindly at thy hand
thou didst unto me write,
My feet upon Mount Sion stand,
in that take thou delight.
5. I am (indeed) in prison (now)
in body, but my mind
Is free to study Christ, and how
unto me he is kind.
6. For tho' men keep my outward man
within their locks and bars,
Yet by the faith of Christ I can
mount higher than the stars.
7. Their fetters cannot spirits tame,
nor tye up God from me;
My faith and hope they cannot lame,
above them I shall be.
8. I here am very much refresh'd
to think when I was out,
I preached life, and peace, and rest
to sinners round about.

9. My business then was souls to save,
by preaching grace and faith,
Of which the comfort now I have,
and have it shall till death.
10. They were no fables that I taught,
devis'd by cunning men,
But God's own word, by which were caught
some sinners now and then.
11. Whose souls by it were made to see
the evil of their sin;
And need of Christ to make them free
from death, which they were in.
12. And now those very hearts that then
were foes unto the Lord,
Embrace his Christ and truth, like men
conquered by his word.
13. I hear them sigh and groan, and cry
for grace to God above;
They loath their sin, and to it die,
" 'tis holiness they love."
14. This was the work I was about
when hands on me they laid,
'Twas this from which they pluck'd me out,
and vilely to me said,
15. You heretick deceiver, come,
to prison you must go;
You preach abroad, and keep not home,
you are the churches foe.
16. But having peace within my soul,
and truth on every side,
I could with comfort them controul,
and at their charge deride.
17. Wherefore to prison they me sent,
where to this day I lye,
And can with very much content
for my profession die.
18. The prison very sweet to me
hath been, since I came here,
And so would also hanging be,
if God will there appear.
19. Here dwells good conscience, also peace;
here be my garments white;

Here;

- Here, tho' in bonds, I have release
from guilt, which else would bite.
20 When they do talk of banishment,
of death, or such like things,
Then to me God sends heart's content,
that like a fountain springs.
21. Alas, they little think what peace
they help me to, for by
Their rage my comforts do increase;
bless God therefore do I.
22. If they do give me gall to drink,
then God doth sweetning cast,
So much thereto, that they can't think
how bravely it doth taste.
23. For as the devil sets before
me heaviness and grief,
So God sets Christ and grace much more,
whereby I take relief.
24. Though they say then that we are fools,
because we here do lie,
I answer, Goals are Christ his schools,
in them we learn to die.
25. 'Tis not the baseness of this state
doth hide us from God's face,
He frequently, both soon and late
doth visit us with grace.
26. Here comes the angels, here comes saints,
here comes the Spirit of God,
To comfort us in our restraints
under the wicked's rod.
27. God sometimes visits prisons more
than lordly palaces,
He often knocketh at our door,
when he our houses miss.
28. The truth and life of heavenly things
lifts up our hearts on high,
And carries us on eagles wings,
beyond carnality.
29. It takes away those clogs that hold
the hearts of other men,
And makes us lively, strong and bold
thus to oppose their sin.

30. By which means God doth frustrate
that which our foes expect;
Namely, our turning the apostate,
like those of Judas sect.
31. Here comes to our remembrance
the troubles good men had
Of old, and for our furtherance,
their joys when they were sad.
32. To them that here for evil lye,
the place is comfortless,
But not to me, because that I
lie here for righteousness.
33. The truth and I were both here cast
together, and we do
Lie arm in arm, and so hold fast
each other; this is true.
34. This goal to us is as a hill,
from whence we plainly see
Beyond this world, and take our fill
of things that lasting be.
35. From hence we see the emptiness
of all this world contains;
And here we feel the blessedness
that for us yet remains.
36. Here we can see how all men play
their parts, as on a stage,
How good men suffer for God's way,
and bad men at them rage.
37. Here we can see who holds that ground
which they in Scripture find;
Here we see also who turns round
like weather-cocks with' wind.
38. We can also from hence behold
how seeming friends appear
But hypocrites, as we are told
in Scripture every where.
39. When we did walk at liberty,
we were deceiv'd by them,
Who we from hence do clearly see
are vile deceitful men.
40. These politicians that profess
for base and worldly ends,

- Do now appear to us at best
but Machiavilian friends.
41. Tho' men do say, we do disgrace
ourselves by lying here
Among the rogues, yet Christ our face
from all such filth will clear.
42. We know there's neither flout nor frown
that we now for him bear,
But will add to our heavenly crown,
when he comes in the air.
43. When he our righteousness forth brings
bright shining as the day,
And wipeth off those scandalous things
that scorners on us lay.
44. We sell our earthly happiness
for heavenly house and home;
We leave this world because 'tis less,
and worse than that to come.
45. We change our drossy dust for gold,
from death to life we fly:
We let go shadows, and take hold
of immortality.
46. We trade for that which lasting is,
and nothing for it give,
But that which is already his
by whom we breathe and live.
47. That liberty we lose for him,
sickness might take away:
Our goods might also for our sin
by fire or thieves decay.
48. Again, we see what glory 'tis
freely to bear our cross
For him, who for us took up his,
when he our servant was.
49. I am most free that men should see
a hole cut thro' mine ear;
If others will ascertain me,
they'll hang a jewel there.
50. Just thus it is we suffer here
for him a little pain,

Who, when he doth again appear,
will with him let us reign.

51. If all must either die for sin
a death that's natural ;

Or else for Christ, 'tis best with him
who for the last doth fall.

52. Who now dare say, we throw away
our goods or liberty,

When God's most holy word doth say
we gain thus much thereby ?

53. Hark yet again, you carnal men,
and hear what I shall say

In your own dialect, and then
I'll you no longer stay.

54. You talk sometimes of valour much,
and count such bravely mann'd,

That will not stick to have a touch
with any in the land.

55. If these be worth commending then,
that vainly shew their might,

Hew dare you blame those holy men
that in God's quarrel fight ?

56. Tho' you dare crack a coward's crown,
or quarrel for a pin,

You dare not on the wicked frown,
nor speak against their sin.

57. For all your spirits are so stout,
for matters that are vain ;

Yet sin befets you round about,
you are in Satan's chain.

58. You dare not for the truth engage,
you quake at prisonment ;

You dare not make the tree your stage
for Christ, that King potent.

59. Know then, true valour there doth dwell
where men engage for God,

Against the devil, death and hell,
and bear the wicked's rod.

60. These be the men that God doth count
of high and noble mind ;

These be the men that do surmount
what you in nature find.

61. First

61. First they do conquer their own hearts,
all worldly fears, and then
Also the devil's fiery darts;
and persecuting men.
62. They conquer when they thus do fall,
they kill when they do die:
They overcome then most of all,
and get the victory.
63. The worldling understands not this,
'tis clean out of his sight;
Therefore he counts this world his bliss,
and doth our glory slight.
64. The lubber knows not how to spring
the nimble footman's stage;
Neither can owls or jackdaws sing
if they were in the cage.
65. The swine doth not the pearls regard,
but them doth slight for grains,
Tho' the wise merchant labours hard
for them with greatest pains.
66. Consider man what I have said,
and judge of things aright;
When all men's cards are fully played,
whose will abide the light?
67. Will those, who have us hither cast?
or they who do us scorn?
Or those who do our houses waste?
or us, who this have borne?
68. And let us count those things the best
that best will prove at last;
And count such men the only blest,
that do such things hold fast.
69. And what tho' they us dear do cost,
yet let us buy them so;
We shall not count our labour lost
when we see others wo.
70. And let saints be no longer blam'd
by carnal policy;
But let the wicked be asham'd
of their malignity.

